

A
Fond Husband:
O R,
The Plotting Sisters.
A
COMEDY:
As it is Acted at His Royal Highness
THE
DUKE's Theatre.

Hec, dum incipias, gravia sunt, dumque ignores, ubi cognoris, facilia, Terent.

Written by *THO. DURFEY* Gent.

Licensed June 15. 1676.

ROGER L'ESTRANGE.

L O N D O N:

Printed by R. E. for James Magnes and Rich. Bentley, in Russell-
street in Covent-Garden, near the Piazza's. 1678.

A
Fond Husband:

OR
The Jealous Lover.

A
COMEDY:

As it is Acted at His Royal Highness's

THE
DUKE's Theatre.

By the same Author.


Written by THO. DUFFY Gent.

ROGER LESTER ANGE.
LONDON.

Printed by R. E. for James Moxon, and John Baskett, in Pall-mall, near the Theatre, in 1708.

To His GRACE, The
Duke of Ormond,

Lord Steward of His Majesties Household,
Knight of the Noble Order of the Garter,
One of His MAJESTIES most Honourable
Privy Council, &c.

May it please your GRACE,
 HE Arrogance a Poet may be guilty of in a
Dedication, often brings him more ter-
ror, than his fear for the success of his
Play; and I always thought the Frowns
of an offended Patron a greater Punish-
ment than the Censures of the Partial Criticks. But the
Sin of Confidence is so natural to a young Poet, and so
suitable to his Character and Business, that an Excuse,
or Reproof, (as it would be extremely unnecessary, so it)
might perhaps be a hinderance to his Fortune. My
fence of this, has encourag'd me to present this Comedy
to your Grace; with this humble Suit, That as it
has indifferently pass'd in the Opinion of the Town, it
may have the Honour to stand as Neutral in your Graces
Favour; The greatest Confidence of a Poet can ask no
more, nor can you, (My Lord) Govern'd by your Ex-
cellent Temper, grant less. This I know I need not
repeat, nor argue a second time. For who ever yet made
an Humble Address to your Grace, that went away un-
satisfied? You are so far from Singularity, so Nobly
Just, and so unwearied in doing good, that to Pen your
Applause, were as impossible a work, as to Pen the
Actions of your Life, every hour producing some memo-
rable

The Epistle Dedicatory.

rable thing as an Addition to the Volume. My Lord,
 'Tis not only my particular Grief, but every ones for
 your Graces departure from England: And though the
 great Place of Trust conferred upon you by His Sacred
 Majesty, (and which none can be more worthy of) gives
 us proof as well of your Pious Loyalty, as Unequal'd
 Grandeur; Yet such an Influence you have gain'd on all
 Hearts, that they had rather the Kingdom of Ireland
 should lose its Preserver, than they so good a Patron.
 This I confess I am most sensible of, perhaps having as
 much cause as any; which Relation I'll smother, lest
 it is thought Interest more than Gratitude makes me
 resent it.

If I have presumed too much, I have this Excuse,
 That a dedication to such a Person cannot be Writ with-
 out it; and 'tis the only Honour a Poet is ambitious
 of, to have a great Name before his Play. I confess
 I was guilty of this; and have only this Excuse for the
 Arrogance of a Dedication. That your Grace was
 pleas'd to favour my Last, and that this was Writ with
 the same Integrity. For the Play I can say nothing,
 only that it was my own, though some are pleas'd to
 doubt the contrary. (The Scotch Song excepted, a part of
 which was not mine; nor do I desire any Reputation from
 it.) Be pleas'd, My Lord, to forgive this Prolixity;
 and believe my sense of the Honour I have in Addressing
 to your Grace, almost equals the Ambition I shall ever
 own, in Stiling my Self.

An Humble Address to your Grace
 by
 J. D.

Drammatis Personæ.

R ashley, a Gentleman, Friend to Emilia.	Mr. Smith.
Ranger, his Rival.	Mr. Harris.
Peregrine Bubble, A credulous fond Cuckold, Husband to Emilia.	Mr. James Nokes.
Old Fumble, a superannuated Al- derman, that dotes on Black Women: He's very deaf, and almost blind; and seeking to cover his imperfection of not hearing what is said to him, an- swers quite contrary.	Mr. Anth. Leigh.
Sir Roger Petulant, a jolly old Knight of the last Age.	Mr. Sandford.
Sneak, Nephew to Sir Roger, a young raw Student.	Mr. Jevan.
Spatterdash, Servant to Fumble.	} Mr. Richards.
Jeremy, Servant to Rashley.	
Apothecary.	Mr. Percival.
Emilia, Wife to Bubble.	Mr. Barrer.
Maria, Sister to Bubble.	Mrs. Marshall.
Cordelia, Niece to Bubble.	Mrs. Hughes.
Betty, Woman to Emilia.	Mrs. Napper.
Governess.	Mrs. Norrice.

Servants and Attendants.

Prologue.

Prologue.

IF Plot and Bu'sness Comical and New,
Could please the Criticks that sit here to view,
The Poet might have thought this Play would do;
But in this Age Design no praise can get:
You cry it Conversation wants, and Wit;
As if the Obvious Rules of Comedy,
Were only dull Grimace and Repartee.
Such, Sirs, have been your Darlings prov'd of late:
The Author therefore careless of his Fate,
And knowing Wit a Chattle hardly got,
Has ventur'd his whole Stock upon a Plot:
He says a mock-Song, or a Smutty Tale,
Can please the Town; and why not this prevail?
I friendly told him, all that I could say,
Was, that your Fancies lean'd the other way;
And you lov'd wenching better than his Play.
For th' Body still you Luxury prepare;
But let the Mind be desolate and bare:
Thus lose your selves in the World's prudent thought;
Then strive to get Reprieve by finding fault.
A Critick is a Monster that can sway
Only o'er Ignorance, and yet dares prey
Upon that Power that form'd him out of Clay.
Adulterate Age, where Prudence is a Vice,
And Wit's as scandalous as Avarice:
Yet in despite of this, — you are Poets yet;
And what two Fops rail at, a third shall do.
Upon our Priviledges you incroach,
And with dull Rhimes the Noble Art debauch.
For writing Plays you scorn a Poets Name;
A Bawdy Song's enough to get you fame;
Where midst the Reputation that is due,
You will be sure no man shall censure you.
Yet though your Faction does infest the Town,
There is a wise Cabal dares judge and own
Deserts and wit, and our Endeavours Crown:
To these we humbly Dedicate our Plays,
Whilst at their Feet our Poets throw their Bays.

THE
FOND-HUSBAND:
OR,
The PLOTTING SISTERS.

ACT I. SCENE I.

*A Dining-Room, a Table, Shuttle-Cock,
and Battle-Der's.*

Rashley and Emilia singing. Betty sings.

IN vain, Cruel Nymph, you my Passion despise;
And slight a Poor-Lover that languishing dies:
Though Fortune my Name with no Titles endow'd,
Yet fierce is my Passion, and warm is my Blood.
Delay in Affection exalts an Amour;
For he that loves often will soonest give o'er.

2.

*But Vigorous and Young I'll flee to thy Arms,
Infusing my Soul in Elizium of Charms.
A Monarch I'll be when I lie by thy side,
And thy pretty Hand my Scepter shall guide;
Till cloy'd with delight you confess with a Joy,
No Monarch so happy, so pleasant as I.*

Rashley.

BY Heav'n, There's nothing so dear to a free and generous
Spirit, as this roving and uncontroul'd way of Love:
Methinks we live like Angels, and every Kiss brings
a new life of pleasure.

Emilia. You have reason to believe I think so, for suf-
fering this early Visit from you in my Husbands absence;
who, poor Man, went from me by break of day to see a Horse-Race a
Mile beyond High-Gate.

Rashley. Nay, I confess, 'tis a sign of your kind resentment of my
passion: Oh Heav'n! that happy thought has made me all rapture:
I'll cherish it Madam, as I would my Youth, or the best of all my
Sences, the Sence of Feeling.

Emilia.

Emilia. Cherish it rather as the means of keeping our love from my Husbands knowledge. Well! I swear the thought of my indirect plot sometimes makes me very melancholy.

Rashley. Melancholy? — Fie, Madam, banish such thoughts for ever from your breast: If you are melancholy now, what would you have done, if I had not known you, when the Clog of your Conscience (I mean your Husband) would have been your perpetual plague, and given you cause for more melancholy than the contrivance of the plots you speak of? —

Emil. Ay; but to break a Vow, Sir, a Vow: Little do you think what 'tis to break a Vow.

Rashley. Little do I think? Madam, I thought you had known me so much a Gentleman, to imagine I know what belongs to the breaking a Vow as well as another man. To undeceive you, I have broke twenty Vows, that is, unnecessary Vows, (such as yours are!) nay, and without a scruple of Conscience: I thank my Stars, I'm of a tougher Constitution.

Emil. Besides, you consider not the other inconveniences; you know my Husband's Sister *Maria* loves you, and is of that untam'd, malicious nature, that she'll revenge my invading her property in your heart, by discovering our love to my Husband: I know she plots it hourly, and tho' her pretence is the Honour of our Family, her real design is through her love to you.

Rashley. Never doubt your Husband, Madam, he has so strange a confidence in my fidelity, that to possess him otherwise, were utterly to take away the little fence is left him: You know he brought me to lodge in his house, which prudently I refus'd at first, and seemingly fled from the Heav'n I desir'd, to make him more importunate: Since I came here, you know how he has carrest me; and to colour my design, and divert you, have feign'd a Mistress in this quarter of the Town; and then, as if I spoke of her, have told him all that has past betwixt my self and you, at which the good-natur'd Creature has laught extreamly, and wish't me good luck a thousand times; and can we now doubt further success? By Heav'n, we cannot Madam.

Emilia. Then you know there's another great obstacle; *Ned Ranger* has long profess'd a passion for me, and doubtless is not ignorant that my love for you is the cause of his no better success: A jealous man sees more than weary others; and 'twill be very necessary for us to be careful of so dang'rous an Enemy.

Rashley. Dang'rous? — not at all, Madam, — never think him so; success, which animates the Hero, and leads him on to greater enterprises than before he durst attempt, has cherish'd hopes in me: Let me alone with him; and for thy part, I gad I'll turn thee loose to any Female Devil on this side *Lapland*, either for plot or repentance.

Emilia. Yet still I fear the worst.

Rashley,

The PLOTTING SISTERS.

3

Rashley. Fear nothing, Madam: Fear is the worst of passions, and incident to base, not noble Hearts; besides, our love, consider'd rightly, is a second-rate Innocence, where affection, not duty, bears prerogative; 'tis the great and primitive business of our Souls, suspicion and fear came in by the by.

Enter Betty.

Betty. Madam, Mr. *Ranger*, in spite of my resistance, has rudely press'd into the House, and is just coming hither.

Emilia. Call up the Footmen, Lock the door.

Enter Ranger.

Ranger. Stand still, Mrs. Jill, or I shall spoil your door-keeping hereafter. Jack *Rashley*, here — Hell and the Devil — [To *Betty*.

Emilia. What insolence is this? pray, Sir, your business?

Ranger. Only my zeal, Madam, to give you notice of an approaching danger: Your Husband has so intangl'd his Horns yonder in a Hawthorn-Bush, that 'tis to be fear'd without immediate help he will lose the decent and commodious ornament of his Forehead.

Emilia. Most impudent of men! how dare you talk thus?

Ranger. Most infamous of women! how dare you do thus?

Rashley. do what, Sir?

Emilia. Hold, and as you love me, move no farther. Basest of men! have you the folly to believe this way can prove beneficial to your love? No, I hate thee mortally, nor shall thy malice from henceforth be successful; I'll disarm it; and when thou thinkest thy plots are surest laid, be sure of a surprize.

Ranger. O infamy! — 'Sdeath, is your Forehead Steel? and is your Skin of that obdurate temper you cannot force a Blush into your Cheeks at the confession of your obscene Crime? — How great a Friend to Hell is Impudence!

Emilia. Pray, Sir, — forgive him, 'tis an insipid Fellow that I am often troubled with; and believe his insolence for the future shall be prevented: in the mean time, to express my gratitude, give me leave to present you with this Necklace; this Ring too will fit your Fingers; — nay, and swear you shan't refuse 'em; my Husband gives me often such as these, 'tis all the good I get by him.

Ranger. Very well — the blessing of a wise let all men Judge. What envious Fiend to plague me makes me love this Creature?

Rash. I will preserve your favours as my life; your memory shall possess my Soul, and all your charms live ever in my sight. — My kindest, sweetest — dearest — [Kisses her hand.

Rang. Death and Damnation, must I stay and see this? Madam, — this modest carriage before a jealous Lover makes —

B

Emil.

4 THE BOND-HUSBAND: or,

Emil. Little for your contentment, I doubt not, Sir. — But 'tis a fate proper enough for such bulie and inquisitive persons.

Rash. Fa, la, la, la. — Sings.

Rang. Go — you are a Devil; so far from being a Woman, that I begin to doubt whether Nature had any hand in your Creation. Is't not enough, Vile Creature, that I know you abuse your Husband, but that you dare give me an ocular proof? Dispencc your favours to the man that horns him before my face? Oh unparallell'd impudence!

Emil. Incorrigeble Fool, think'st thou to daunt my will? the little I do can raise no infamy, nor will I ever doubt it.

Rash. Fa, la, la, la.

*The joys of a Lover in passion remains,
In passion that's fervent and free, &c.*

Enter Betty.

Betty. Oh Madam, my Master's just come home, and coming up.

Rang. Blest minute! now I hope his eyes will be unseal'd, and through the right end of the Perspective see you: Madam, assure your self there shall want nothing in me.

Emil. I know, Sir, and am prepar'd for the worst of thy malice. Here, take this Battle-dor, and let us play. [They play.]

Rash. Out, our Madam — y'are out.

Enter Bobble.

Bobb. Ha, ha, ha — Chicken; Good morrow, Chicken. —
Morrow Tom. — Chick, prethee let me kiss thee: What in the mumps? — This morning, pop — no more of that — hoh — What my old Friend *Ranger* too! *Morrow Ned.* Faith! would you had been with me this morning, I have had the rarest sport yonder at *High-Gate* with two or three Country fellows — *Harkee, Chick,* I have invited 'em all to Dinner one day this week, good hunt course. *Bellows Faith,* but damnable rich: — as Gad judge me, I pass for a brave Fellow amongst 'em.

Emil. You need boast of applause from such Clowns.

Bobb. Clowns? What, honest, tough, hard fitted, plain-dealing Farmers, Clowns? — Pop — I say, you are an inconsiderable Varlet, Chicken, — and know not what belongs to such good company.

Rang. She is so well diverted at home, Sir, that all Rural society is distasteful to her.

Emil. I guess 'em to be much of your humour, Sir, Owners of a great deal of dull, insipid noise, and very little or no sense.

Bobb. Well said, Chicken. — *Ned.* To her. — To her agen,

Ned;

Ned ; 'Tis a raging Turk at Reporter. — Invent, invent ; strike her home ; prethee try her wit. — Thou art a Scholar, — for my part I dare not. (As Gad judge me !) she's always too hard for me. —

Rang. And me too, I assure you, Sir. — But there's a Gentleman that has the good fortune to be more intimate : — his address is far more pleasing than mine. —

Bubb. Who, Tom ! Come, I'll hold a Guinea she's too hard for him too ; why, 'tis the readi'st, witti'st, jeering'st, fleering'st Ocean. — 'Sbud she's one of the pearls of Eloquence. — And Pop, — by the way let me tell you, there's ne'er an Orator in Christendom has more Tropes and Figures, take her when her hands in. —

Rang. Nor knows the Art of Wheedling better, I'll say that for her. —

Bubb. Gad, thou art in the right, she's a *Non Parelia* at it : but now you talk of Wheedling, prethee, Tom, how goes thy Love affairs ? Thou look'st but ill upon't : — Any plots ? adventures of late ? Hah !

Rash. None that can make me frown, Sir. — My Stars have allotted me so mild a destiny, that I can care for my Friend with my wonted Air, without being discourag'd by my success in Love-affairs.

Bubb. I'm glad on't Faith : Come, prethee let me be partaker of thy good fortune ; — when wert thou with her ?

Emil. Tell him, tell him, Sir : Lord, you never used to be so cautious in these matters : — pray tell him and tremble : — Now observe.

[To Ranger aside.]

Rash. Why, Sir, — I was with her this morning.

Bubb. So ! and what success prethee !

Rash. Why at my first coming she entertain'd me with a Song, softly expressing the delights of Love in an excellent Air, and added to it a thousand kind words and kisses : I had all the privilege imaginable, and 'twas my good luck to come at a very happy hour, for her Husband went out early i'th morning a Fowling as far as *Holloway*.

Bubb. *Holloway* ? — a Pox on't — what damn'd luck had I ? If it had been *High-Gate* I should have met the Fool ; for I have been there all this morning.

Rash. Ah ! 'tis no matter, Sir, his company can add little to my ones credit ; for he is but a kind of a soft-headed, a half-witted Fellow.

Bubb. A Ninny, a Fool. — Ha, ha, ha.

Rash. Ay, and the most credulous of all the Cuckolds I ever met with.

Bubb. I poor Animal ! Faith I pity him, but there's a number of 'em about Town i'faith, — we men of wit should want diversion else.

Rang. We men of wit, quoth a ! Dams him, he's duller than a Justice Clark. — To be made a property all this while, and not discern it, Oh insufferable stupidity !

Emil. Observe, Sir, observe.

Rang. Yes, Devil, I do observe ; I doubt not but my observation

shall add little to your quiet, Oh curse of —
Bubb. Why how now, Ned? what, grinning like a Monkey eating of Chestnuts? — prethee what art thou thinking on? As Gad jidge me, I think thou art grown insipid, as my Wife says; How dost like *Tom's* Intrigue? Ha, — is it not pleasant?

Rang. Very pleasant, Sir, and faith in my judgment represents as nearly as any character I ever saw —

Bubb. Represents? — whoo pox you're at your Quirks and Quiddits, your *Cambridge*-Puns and *Westminster*-Quibbles are you?

Emil. Pray forward, Sir, methinks 'tis very divertive.

Rang. Very divertive! Dam her, she was sure the Off-spring of *Bilzebub*.

Rass. After a thousand other caresses intermixt with kisses and smiles, and a world of happy thoughts and fancies extravagantly rendred upon for happy an occasion, she oblig'd me in a new and most sensible way, presenting me, with a sweet and incomparable grace, this Gold Watch, and this Diamond Ring. [*Ranger looks amazedly.*]

Bubb. Prethee observe *Ned* there, he's grown a strange whimsical Fellow; Ha, ha, ha, look how he stares!

Rang. Was ever such an Impudence? — sure I dream! and this is all delusion! — *Markce, Sir,* are you irrecoverably blind?

Bubb. Blind? what I blind?

Rang. Methinks that Watch looks very like one I have seen your Wife wear often.

Bubb. Ha! as Gad jidge me, and so it does; but much good do thy heart, *Tom*, I'll warrant it right.

Rang. Methinks that Ring too much resembles yours.

Bubb. The square is right, — but I think my Stones were a little bigger.

Rang. Now the Devil take thee for a dull Rogueman!

Rass. But the best jest was, before she gave me these, there happen'd to come rudely into the Room a wild, young Fellow, that I found afterwards to be my Rival, and one she hated for his ill-nature and impudence; but to see how pitiful he look'd to see me so presented before his face, would have made you die with laughing. Ha, ha, ha,

Bubb. } Ha, ha, ha.

Emil. } Ha, ha, ha.

Rang. Hell and Euries, what's this I hear? am I made a property too? If I be, this may I be posset for a Coward, and my infamy known to all Nations. — *Markce, Sir,*

Rass. Well, Sir, with his vinegar a chamber of —

Rang. By your ridiculous steering behaviour, I guess I was concern'd in your last description, an affront that requires instant satisfaction; and belov'd *Sir*, you shall not carry it off so easily as you imagin'd: That he is such a fool to be bubb'd out of his reason, — I am not — ;

follow.

follow me, Sir, if you dare.

Rash. Dare! Lead on, Sir,—you shall see how much I dare.

Emil. Hold, Sir, you shall not go.

Rash. Dare follow you?

Rang. Ay, Sir, 'twould be a doubtful question, if your protection there were out of the way.

Rash. What's that? protection?

Bubb. How now?—what jokes? hard words? what's the matter, Tom?

Emil. 'Tis Mr. Ranger's at humour; preshee, Love, speaks to him,

he's always disturbing good company; tell him, he's impertinent.

Bubb. Gad, and so I will.—What a pox, a man cannot be a little jocose in his own house but he must disturb him; you shall see me go and huff him.

Rang. His Horns I am sure are large enough;—Horns of sufficient growth, substantial Horns; Horns visible, large, craggy-branch'd rough Horns, and yet he may not believe it.

Bubb. Believe what, Nidd? Ha, ha, ha.—He's mad.—Down-right out of his Wits: 'Tis a thick skull'd Fellow, God knows,

but we were not all born to be Wits.

Rang. Why, Sir, I believe you are mad.

Bubb. I mad?—Dairns Nelly, you're an impertinent fellow. Now observe, Chicken.

Rang. How, Sir?

Bubb. I say, Sir, an impertinent Fellow, Sir, and deserve to be cramb'd into a Powdering-Tub—

Rash. Dismal this Fool, how he tortures me; but my revenge lies another way; I'll instantly go to his sister, *Maria*, who I know loves *Rashley*, and will willingly join with me in my revenge. This must do, and I'll about it instantly.

Bubb. Ah—he's gone; I thought when I began to roar once, he would quickly vanish. I warrant I have frighted him into an Ague.—Poor Fool, he'll hardly trouble us again this good while.

Rash. An unwill person, first to intrude into our company, and then to hinder our discourse, especially of so pleasant a Narration:—Gad! 'twas too much.

Bubb. Too much?—Why, 'twas the Devil and all; and as Gad judges me, he's the Son of a Whore, and I'll make him an example.

Enter Footman.

Footm. Sir Roger Perilous with his Nephew, and old Mr. Fumble are come to visit you.

Bubb. Gads so!—Sirrah! wait on 'em up, and call my Niece down.

This is the man, Chicken, I told thee that I told thee of, *Corde's*—

band ; He's very Rich, I am told, and his Father's a Knight, and Sheriff of the County.

Emil. But who is the other, Sir?

Bubb. Why, dost not know him? 'Tis old Alderman Fumble, He's a little deaf, but is a very good company, and will so fumble about the Women.—You shall see he's a very jolly Fellow, and reparteeer, and talks, and chats at all rates;—but the Devil a word he hears, for he always answers quite contrary.—He'll make us all laugh is aith.

Emil. I've heard he dotes on all the Women he sees, and is as passionate and inconstant at his age of Seventy Three, as the brisk Sparks of our times are at Five and Twenty.

Raj. He says (the Devil take him that believes him) nothing fails him but his Eyes, which defect he has lately amended by a pair of Venetian Spectacles.

Rubb. Ha, ha : 'tis a pleasant old Fellow.——But here they come.

Enter Sir Roger, Sneak, Fumble.

Sir Ray. Cob? come, Cob, come! along, I say, and hold up thy
 head.—Fie, fie,—be not so bashful, Child.—Nay, Cob,—what
 dost think I'll forsake Thee?—Fie, in verity I will not: Wipe
 thy Eyes, I say.

Enter Cordelia.

Bobb. He's a little moody-hearted, that's the worst on't.—But the young man will show his parts by and by, I warrant ye.—Come hither, Nicce: Sir Roger. Your most humble Servant.

[*Old Fumble pulls out his Spectacles, and looks on Cordelia.*]

Sir Reg. Yours good Mr. *Pergrino*. You see, Sir, I am as good as my word: I have brought my Nephew, *Cob*, here's your Mrs. *Cob*. Look, look up, — and go and salute her. I'll show thee the way. Nay, *Cob*, still in thy dumps? — Look upon me, Man! I'll do't first.

Sneak. Well, well! I'll follow you, Uncle! I am a little bashful at present, but I shall come to't anon.

Sir Reg. Well laid, Madam! I am your humble Servant.

Sneak. And I likewise Madam !

Fumble. Ifack, ifack! a pretty well-favour'd Woman that there! A good Eye, good Hair, and ifack I think ev'ry thing good——he——
Hem, Mr. Periwinkle, brother who is that there? that Woman there?

Bubb. Who, the yonder?

What an ignorant old Fellow 'tis, not to know my Niece!

Famb.

The PLOTTING SISTERS: 67

Fumb. A Friend? Well I could have heard you, I could have heard you without this exclamation: What ifack, I am not deaf, I could have heard you: but if she be a Friend, I hope an old Friend may salute her; 'tis a civility well paid. By your leave, Sweet Lady.

[Goes to kiss Cordelia, and kisses Sneak.]

Sneak. What the Devil does this old Fellow mean? Uncle! did you ever see the like?

Sir Rog. Ha, ha, ha! a pleasant mistake ifaith.

Fumb. Ha! ifack I think I was mistaken, was I not; Gentlemen? was I not? I doubt my false light guided me to the wrong person. — Hah! But come, no matter, I meant it right, Madam, I meant it right: Never the older for a mistake ifack! I meant it right.

Cord. I am glad I mist it for all that.

Sir Rog. Mr. *Rushley*, you are not merry; in troth I fear I have disturb'd you. — Hah!

Rash. Not at all, Sir; 'tis impossible your free humour can be troublesome to any one.

Sir Rog. You know my old way, Sir, jovial and inoffensive. — Pray let me commend my Nephew to you. *Cob.* come hither. — He's a little too modest, Sir; — but else I think I may say, — a youth of notable parts: Come hither, *Cob.*

Rash. I can believe no less: Sir, your humble Servant.

Sneak. With all my heart, Sir; and I am your Servant in like manner.

Cord. Bless me! what a Figure of a Husband shall I have?

Sir Rog. You know, Sir, when I was a Bachelor I delighted much in merry Songs and Catches. — Ah! *Sawny Broom* are Fellow; and when a dozen of us Royalists were met at the Mirror under the Rose there, the Leveller went round; round, ifaith. — I hold out still, Sir, as well as I can; and tho' I cannot sing my self, I keep those that can.

Bubb. Ay, and so do I. — My Wives Maid shall sing you a Scotch Song: — Come, sing it *Betty*. — [Betty sings.]

A Scotch SONG.

IN January last in Munnonday at Aterne.

As along the Fields I pass to view the Winter Corn,
I leapt me behind, and saw come o're the Knaugh,
Ten glancing in an Apron with a bonny brent brow.

2.

I bid, God Merrow, Fair Maid, and she right courtously,
Bike lew and Sins kind Sir, she said, God Day agen to ye.

I speard o her, Fair Maid, and I, how far inland you now?
Quo she, I mean a Mole or two to gender beum brought.

3. Fair

*Heed, my dear Sir, I have heard you say, that you have a mind to
 have your Maid, but we are contented to be the Company; and I am sure
 For I am going out the Gate that you intend to be. When we had
 made a while or two, I said to her, my Dear,
 May I not light your Apron, and kiss your bonny brow?*

*Nea, God Sir, you are far mistaken, for I am near a those,
 I hope you be more breeding than to light a Woman's Clouth;
 For I be a better chosen than any like as you, Who boldly may my
 Apron light, and kiss your bonny brow.*

*Nay, gif you are contracted, I have no more to say;
 Rather than be rejected, I will give me the Play;
 And I will choose you a my own that shall not on me rev,
 Will boldly let me light her Apron, kiss her bonny brow.*

*Sir, I see you are proud-hearted, and leath to be said. Nay;
 You need not call be feared for eadit that I did say;
 You know Women for modesty no at the first timer Booz;
 But gif we like your Company we are as kind as you.*

*Bubb. How dee like it?
 Sir R. Oh! I have hundred such as this, Sir.*

Fumb. A pretty matter ifack, a very pretty matter.

Rash. Doubt, Sir, you heard it not.

Fumb. Ay, is it not, Mr. Rashley is it not? Ifack I like it well.

Rash. With all my heart, Sir.

Fumb. Right ifack, it was song well indeed.

Om. Ha, ha, ha!

*Bubb. Well said, Grandfire Fumblo. Come, Sir Roger,
 now let's in, and tofs a Bomper about.*

*Sir R. I wait upon you, Sir, God lead in your Mistress. [Exitum.
 Manent, Rashley, and Emilia.*

*Rash. So! thus far all is well. But what's next to be done?
 for I know Ranger and Maria are plotting mischief.*

*Emilia. To prevent 'em we must counterfeit a falling out by railing
 at you to my Husband. I'll soon confirm it in his opinion; but be sure
 you are melancholly enough, and by this means their designs are fru-
 strated, and we still safe in our intrigue.*

*Rash. Excellent! And I'll warrant you, Sweet, I'll play my
 part well.*

*Emilia. The better will be the success; but let's go in for fear we
 are seen.*

*Rash. Thus whilst we're equally involv'd in thought,
 That side fares best that says the wisest word. [Exitum.
 The*

The Second A C T.

Enter Ranger and Maria.

Rang. **N**Ever was an Intrigue carried with so much confidence ; every word they spoke retain'd a double meaning ; but so evident, that any Animal, but a dull Husband, could not fail to understand it : for they were so far from hiding their Amour, that they openly confess all ; only speaking in a third person for a slender security. He stood and heard it, and often would laugh heartily to hear himself notoriously abused.

Mar. An insipid Fool ! Oh that I had been there to have chang'd the Scene a little ! But, Sir, cou'd you be idle on such an occasion ? Why did not you play your part cunningly, and discover 'em ?

Rang. Faith, I did what I could : but the cunning Devil your Sister, still as I was speaking something towards the discovery, would interrupt me, and in a minute dash all my hopes, by turning what was said into raillery.

Mar. Is she so politic ? 'tis very well : I once imagin'd I could best design, and thought my talent of Wit equal with any. But are they so intimate, say ye, Sir ?

Rang. As Man and Wife.

Mar. Impudent Fellow ! dares he insult over my Love ? Baffle my passion with a sly pretence ? I am not fair enough ; but he shall find my Brain has Wit enough to ruin his design, Fool as I am.

Rang. Now the Devil in her is working hard for me ; we shall have it anon. [Aside.]

Mar. Fool'd by a Brother's wife ! A Creature that the Law makes kin to me ! No, 'twas tamely thought, and I as tamely now should suffer wrongs had I a Daftard Spirit. But in me Nature has shown her Master piece, and to a Masculine person Providence has bestow'd an Active Soul so sensible of wrongs, that to forgive would argue me as base as their treachery.

Rang. Now the thunders ; the Devil has been priming her all this while, and now she scatters like a Hand Grenade. [Aside.]

Mar. My love refus'd ! 'Tis Death to the dull Fool ; Death, double Death ; Damnation too 'tis likely. — But why did I name it Love ? there's no such word ; for with this breath I banish it for ever, and in my breast receive obscure revenge, my Heart's delightful Darling ! Oh the pleasure in that slender word Revenge ! — I'll plague the Fool her Husband with a story shall make his Gall flow upwards.

Rang. Plague him with doubts, and make his jealousy break into violent

violent fits of rage and passion : I'll further all, Madam; by Heav'n I will not fail you.

Mar. Enough; and doubt not we'll soon turn the Current.

Rang. We'll catch 'em in his Lodging.

Mar. Entrap 'em there, and bring him to see it,

Rang. Right : What else ? We'll shame 'em.

Mar. Slight 'em.

Rang. Laugh at 'em.

Mar. Vex 'em.

Rang. Ruine 'em.

Mar. Dam 'em.

Rang. Hey ! by Heav'n 'tis excellent; and now I see the sence of wrongs can arm a Female Spirit, and make it vigorous. — Oh I adore thy temper !

Mar. I'll instantly go to her, and first charge her with the fact, then upbraid her : for I am resolv'd never to let her rest till she deserts his passion.

And whilst he suffers that base Wretch to woo her, I'll plot, and counterplot, but I'll undo her.

Rang. I am glad I met with her, for of all the persons I am acquainted with, she only has enough of the Devil to follow such a business closely : for she'll never rest till she has betray'd 'em, which still will further my revenge; and I am resolv'd to enjoy her Sister, if it be but only for the dear pleasure of boasting it hereafter. I'll strat to *Bubbe*, and once more infect him with my poison. *Maria* is my Pilor, and her being thus slighted by *Rashley*, will still augment her desire of revenge 'tis natural to the Sex.

Forbault, a Woman once, and love rebate,
Not all the Devils shall reclaim her hate.

Scene 2

Enter Rashley, Emilia.

Emilia. Manage it but carefully, you need not doubt the consequence, I have already possess my Husband with a belief of our variance, and I know his coming up with an intent to reconcile us. I'll not be seen; the rest is your part, carry it but handsomly, and *Ranger's* plots are fruitless. *Maria* has sent also to speak with him; I guess the business, and I am accordingly provided. But remember you are not tardy.

Rashley. Never doubt me, Madam; I am more a Lover, than to be

idle in a bus'ness, that so nearly concerns us, besides, 'tis so well contriv'd and so easie to be follow'd, that to fail now would demonstrate me as defective in sense as your Husband is. But what bus'ness can your Sister have with you? The Devil and She have been plotting together about this Intrigue.

Emil. Let 'em plot:—I am so much her Sister, that my part shall never be wanting to furnish the Comedy. I'll go to her strait: in the mean time be you sure to play your part with him.—Hark! I hear him coming. *[Noise within. Exit.]*

Rash. Well! I never thought a Woman till now so necessary a Creature. Intrigues are their Master-pieces, and as readily they undertake 'em as a Country Lawyer a bad Cause from a half-witted Client: 'twould be excellent sport to here the two She-Wolves bark one at another: but since I cannot be there, I'll divert my self with entertaining the Fool her Husband.—Here he comes. Now to my studied posture.

Enter Bubble.

Bubb. Why how now, Tom? What, all a morn? In verity this is Foppery, as Sir Roger says. Come, cheer up, cheer up, Man, and hold up thy head: in troth thou makest me sad to see the look so like so like a Gammon of Bacon. There I was sharp upon him. Ha, ha! a good jest afaith.

Rash. Dam him, what a simile the Fool has found out! *[Aside.]* Sir, it lies not in any mans power to banish serious thoughts at all times.—Besides, I have some cause for my present melancholy.

Bubb. The cause?—Come, come, Tom.—I know the cause, ha, ha.—You thought I warrant to have carried matters so privately; but if I once go about such a bus'ness, there's ne'er a man in Christendom (tho' I say it) can find out a cause sooner than I.

Rash. You may be mistaken in mine, Sir, for all that.

Bubb. Mistaken? ha, ha!—I see, Tom, thou knowest not what 'tis to be ingenious: I tell thee once more I do know the cause, the very cause; and more than that, the cause of that cause.—'Sbud there's ne'er an Attorney in the Inns of Court knows more causes than I do.

Rash. I doubt not but in the end you'll be brought to confess your self too positive in this particular: but since you have such an excellent faculty, and imagine your self so well skild in finding out secrets come, what is't what is't?

Bubb. What is't? Why, ha, ha, ha!—My Wife—my Wife, Tom, and you're sold out, ha, ha!—have I mump't you now, ifaith?

Rash. I must confess you are in the right, Sir.

Bubb. O must you so, Sir? What a pox I warrant you thought we Husbands had no wit but what our Wives lend us? But I would have you

you to know, *Tom*, that I am a Leviathan at these matters: to be plain, that is as much as to say, a Whale.

Rash. I am sufficiently convinc'd of your excellent judgment, *Sir*; and as I have confess'd to you freely the cause of my sadness, to be your Wives ill usage of me, so I am continually torrur'd to guess the reason: for I am confident, *Sir*, you know I always honour'd her, and lov'd her.

Bubb. Faith! so thou didst! I'll say that for thee; and by the Lord *Harry* she shall love and honour thee too, or I'll be very sharp upon her? I'll pinch her severely faith, for all she's my Chicken: nay if she'll be still refractory, rather than fail thou shalt pinch her too, *Tom*. I am not like your surly-burly, waspish cross-grain'd Fellows, that fall out and fight about their Wives: 'Sbud I'll give my friend leave at any time to chastise my Wife if she don't behave her self civilly.

Rash. You ever load me with your kind expressions, Dear Friend!

Bubb. Dear *Tom*, Faith thou'rt an honest Fellow.

[Embrace.]

Rash. This ever is the fate of Cuckolds.

[Aside.]

Bubb. Never doubt; — I'll bring you together agen with a vengeance: nay, I can tell you the reason of her anger too, if I thought 'twere convenient.

Rash. Convenient! Why, *Sir*, 'tis the only thing that conduces to my contentment; for I have long studied in vain, and could never yet so much as guess at it: Let me beg it of you, *Sir*; come, I'm sure you cannot deny so near a Friend.

Bubb. I faith I cannot, — that's the truth on't, and thou shalt have it. — Why, you must know, *Tom*, one night (when I was examining her about you) she told me very seriously that the cause of her anger was, that you promis'd to give her a Squirrel that night, and never kept your word, and she loves Squirrels passionately.

Rash. 'Tis true; I confess I did promise her; — but as the Devil would have it, I was disappointed utterly of my Squirrel that night my self; for I got very drunk, and from thence sprung this fatal consequence.

Bubb. Pugh! — no matter, I'll warrant thee I'll bring all about again.

Rash. Oh 'tis impossible; — I am sure she'll neer be brought to't.

Bubb. Not brought to't? Yes, I'll lay my commands upon her, and I'll have you know she shall be brought to't; — I'll lay a Wage I'll reconcile you both before night.

Rash. Done: any Wage,

Bubb. What shall it be?

Rash. Why, Five Guineys to be spent in a Treat of Ven'son and Champagne.

Bubb. Agreed Faith, and we'll drink and sing *Tory Rorley*. — Not reconcile you? — You shall be all one before to-morrow-morning.

have

have a spell for that; I'll do't, I say; come along, Boy.——

Rash. A petty Friend for pimping we applaud;
But of all Men a Husband's the best Bawd.——

SCENE 3.

Enter Sir Roger, Cordelia, Sneak.

Sir Rog. **M** Adam, You, as being the Niece to Mr. *Pergrine*, truly deserve the favour I intend you by this Alliance: You are a handsome Woman, and in verity were I a young Man, none shou'd be more forward than I for a place in your affection. I like your Air well; and upon my Faith you have the right way on't. Ah! — Madam, I once saw the days when such an Eye as yours — Well, I say no more on't, 'tis for my Nephew now I make addresses; — you see what he is, Madam; — His Face is none of the worst, nor his Person I think any way defective — In brief, Madam, I present him to you, nor shall he want an Estate to make him worthy.

Cord. 'Tis well he nam'd an Estate to Candy over his bitter Pill, my Queanish Stomach would else have hardly digested it. — Lord! how he looks? —

Sir Rog. *Cob!* go, — prethes go and make your address to the Lady. He's newly come from the Colledge, Madam, and is as the rest of 'em are, a little bashful at first; but by that time h'as seen a Play or two.

Cord. Methinks this silence becomes him very well, Sir: A Student should always be contemplative; 'tis a great sign of Learning.

Sir Rog. 'Tis a sign he thinks the more: But, Madam, Ladies of this Age are not to be won with Imaginary Courtship, 'tis the practice part they love; and he that can sing well, dance well, talk well, rhyme modestly, swear decently, and ly confoundedly, — is certainly the happy man, whilst others pass unregarded.

Cord. I see, Sir, you are well skill'd in Modish Address; but give me leave to tell ye, perhaps few other Ladies are of my humour: I love words considerably spoken.

Sir Rog. And I too, Faith Madam. *Cob,* Dec hear that, *Cob!* —
Sneak. Ay, ay! 'tis a fine Woman, by *Jerico*, and now I begin to be a little in heart: I shall put up well enough anon, Uncle.

Sir Rog. Well said! Why now I love thee: And, Madam, as to his Interior Vertues, I dare speak for 'em; His Wit is hereditary; Ah! his Father, old Sir *Jeremy Sneak*, had a notable Head-piece, and troth *Cob* comes very near him; you'll find it, Madam, when he talks with you.

Cord. Your Character of him, Sir, gives me the satisfaction I should receive in his discourse: I imagine him to be one of those that hoord

up

up Wit for *Plato's* great Year, and are very shie of using their Talent for fear of diminishing the value in making it too common.

Sir Rog. In veriry, Madam, I always held him so. *Cob!*

Sneak. Ay, Madam, you may say of me what you please; I am your Slave.——your Vassal,——your pigg, Madam: But as for Wit, as my Nuncle says, I think I may compare with another, take the Court-Cabal away.——'Tis a blessing thrown upon me: Besides, mine is none of your Wheadling Wits, that cheat for a Livelihood: I am no Parasite, Madam;—I am a Scholar, I!

Sir Rog. In troth he's in the right:——Did not I tell you, Madam, he would speak notably?——Ah, 'tis a Wag.

Cord. His Disputes in the Colledge have added extreamly to his Rhetorick; he speaks with good Emphasis, and gives a delightful period to every Jest, of which I see he has many: But I would fain have the Gentleman speak himself, a little talk I am sure would become him.

Sir Rog. He shall do't, Madam.——*Cob*, now's your time;——she's wrought finely.——Madam, I'll take my leave for a minute;——I know his temper, Madam;——he'll speak the better for my absence.——

Cord. Pray, Sir, what University was blest with your presence? *[Exit.*

Sneak. Cambridge, Madam.——

Cord. Will you not be angry if I ask you one Question more?

Sneak. O Lord, Angry, Madam? You do not know me. Angry! You mistake me clearly: We of the Round Cap are not giv'n to't; 'tis your Graduates are the angry people.

Cord. Pray, what have you learnt at Cambridge?

Sneak. Learnt! whar a Plaguy Question's that?——where's my Uncle now?——Learnt, Madam?

Cord. Yes, Sir, Learnt!

Sneak. Why, Madam,——I learnt Nothing.

Cord. Nothing, Sir!

Sneak. No,——but to wear a Daggled Gown, as the rest do, and eat dry Chops of Rotten Mutton: We Fellow-Commoners don't go thither to learn;——Madam, we go for Diversion, we.

Cord. I thought you had gone to learn the Sciences.

Sneak. Right, Madam;——but not Gentlemen: Your green half-witted Pupils, I confess, come thither for some such businels; that is, Madam, your Priggs that would be Parsons. But the Sciences of your Persons of Quality;——I'll give you a description;——Hum?——'Tis to Wench immoderately——To be Drunk hourly;——To wear their Cloaths slovenly;——To abuse the Proctor damnably;——And so be expell'd the Colledge triumphantly:——There are sev'n,——but I contented my self with these.

Cord. This is ever found,——Your shie Fool is in his nature more impudent,

pudent than the greatest Professors of Debauchery.—I must shift him off.—

Enter Fumble.

Fumb. Oh!—here she is;—and ifack I'll put up to her now I have found her. How dost thou do, Girl—Hah! how dost thou do? Give me thy hand. Ah, little Rogue!—Well, I have been with my Goldsmith about the Ring I promis'd thee; Thou shalt have it, Bird, thou shalt have it.—How now, who is that there?

Sneak. O the Devil!—Now will the old doting Fellow disturb us before I have told her half my mind. Who am I, Sir? Why, Sir, I am one that cares as little—

Fumb. Thank you heartily, Sir, ifack;—I am very well; only cold weather, cold weather.—'Tis Sir Roger's Nephew! A pretty Fellow,—a very pretty Fellow.

Sneak. Very well, Sur; wou'd you were very sick. 'Ounds, I must beat this Fellow.—

Cord. Here's like to be rare sport.

Sneak. Pray, Old Philosopher, depart in silence for fear of further damage; this Lady and I have business.

Fumb. Ifack, and so she is, Sir, very pretty, very pretty, *bona fide*. Ah that black o'th top there! Well, I'll say no more. But, ifack, Black Hair, Black Eyes, and a Black—(Gad forgive me, what was I going to say?)—Patch or two further Generation? more than Tissues and Embroideries.

Sneak. Generation? O Lord! was ever such an Impudence? An old doting impotent Fellow, one that was rotten in his Minority, and now has lost three of his five Sences, to talk of Generation! I am impatient: will you be gone, Sir? 'Sbud I wil so swinge you else.

Cord. Hold, Sir, and pray forbear this rudeness; I like his Company very well.—

Sneak. How I like him? Why, he has Nothing, Madam: A Lady can like no Hearing, no Smelling, no Tasting, no Teeth, no Strength, no—nothing I say that a man should have? Besides, he's above fourscore; and by being a Stallion in his Youth, has acquir'd to be a Baboon in his Age, by *Jerico*.—'Sbud, like him, quoth a?

Fumb. What does the wag say? Hah! What does he say? He's a pretty spruce Fellow, Madam, and ifack knows a Hawk from a Hand-saw, as the saying is.—But here are those not far off that ifack know as much as he, if that were all; what think'st thou, Bird? do they not? do they not Rogue? well, still I say that Hair of thine. Ah, Rascal!

Cord. I am glad it pleases you, Sir.

Sneak. But, Madam, when shall I begin? 'Sbud, me thinks we lose time.

Cord.

78 *The FOND-HUSBAND* or,

Cord. Begin! What, Sir?

Sneak. Why, my Courtship. Pox o' this old chatt'ring Fellow; if he had not come, I had been out of my pain before now:—Hark ye, Reverend Sir, 'Bud! what d'ee do prating here? why don't you go and chat to your Grand-daughter at home, if you love Women so well?—

Famb. Hah! — what does the Wag say, Madam?

Cord. He says, Sir, he's extremely in love with your Grand-daughter.

Famb. My Grand—daughter? and ifack she deserves it, Madam: She's a juicy, spritely Girl; she'll make a Pottle of Water of a Pint of Ale; A Chip o' the old Block, *bona fide*, and shall turn her Back to ne'er a one in Christendom of her Inches, Ill say that for her.

Enter Betty.

Betty. Sir, there's one Mrs. *Snare* below desires to speak with you.

Sneak. *Snare!* O Lord, what shall I do? how the Devil came she to know I was here? Hark, — prether, Sweet-heart, tell her I am gone. Oh! I would not see her for the World.

Betty. Sir, she says she dogg'd you hither, and swears and rants yonder strangely.

Sneak. O damn'd Queen! what shall I do?

Betty. And vows if you come not instantly, she'll go into the Parlor to Sir *Roger*, and discover something to him, I know not what; but I saw she was a Big-bellied Woman, and I was loath to discourage her.

Ex. Betty.

Sneak. Well, well, — tell her I'll come; why how the Devil could she get from Cambridge already?

Cord. What's the matter, Sir? Not well?

Sneak. Yes, I thank you, Madam, very well, only thinking of a little business I have; I must about it presently: Madam, Your Servant, I'll wait on you some other time. I must go and pacifie this Queen; This comes of learning the Sciences with a Pox. — *Exit Sneak.*

Cord. Come Sir, shall we go in?

Famb. Ifack, — and so he is, Madam: but the Fellow has some pretty parts, and will grow better in time: But come, let's go in and see Sir *Roger*.

Cord. 'Twas that I askt you.

Famb. Hah! dost like me, sayst thou, ifack? I'm glad on't. Shall we not have a word or two in private, my little Queen of Fairies? We must, I say, we must. — Ah Rogue! — I'll warrant thou art a Swinger: — But come, let's go. — *Ex.*

Scene

SCENE 4.

Emilia's Bed Chamber.

Enter Maria and Emilia severally.

Emil. **N**ow for my Talent of Women! I see by her looks I shall have occasion for it.

Mar. Sister!

Emil. Sister!

Mar. The natural love I bear you, and my desire to prevent your growing Infamy has brought me hither to give you counsel.

Emil. The fence I have of your ill nature, and my knowledge of the little good it will do you, has brought me hither to give you advice.

Mar. Your Reputation is lowly branded by all tongues, and I only as a Sister have power to speak indifferently of your Life in hopes of your Reformation.

Emil. Your Malice and unexampled Envy is mortally hated by all people; I only as a Sister retaining so much pity as to desire its utter Dissolution.

Mar. Why do you echo me?

Emil. Why do you question me? What have I done deserves it?

Mar. Done! Recollect your thoughts, and then confess; for my part, shame ties up my tongue I dare not speak it.

Emil. Dare not! Nay, that I am sure is false, you dare speak any thing: Come, prethee don't fright me, what is 't you mean?

Mar. Excellent cunning! He has fitted me. *Aside.* Why would you seem ignorant? I confess to a stranger you might be cautious of a nice Confession: But this artifice to your Sister, he, *Emilia.*

Emil. Now I'll lay my life your design is to wheedle something out of me to make you self merry withal.

Mar. Rare Fall! — Nor Madam, this is no such merry matter; the Infamy of a Family is not so to be jested with.

Emil. Infamy! Nay, then I see 'tis time to be serious: Come, express it; I suppose 'tis the Invention of your Envy, some new stratagem to affront me with; I am no stranger to your temper.

Mar. This is an impudence beyond a prostitute. Do I not know you are false?

Emil. False! How?

Mar. False to your Husband; False with *Rashley*; I need not tell you how, you best know that.

Emil. I know you love him! and am sensible of the Intrigues and Assignations which you have had, which makes your meaning visible But methinks this is so strange a design.

Mar. Design! What is't she means? I hope you can tax me with no such crime with him.

Emil. Not 'tis not my business; I have only liberty to guess: yet indeed your often private meetings were a little suspicious, and I suppose your late rallery was only a design; but you might have took a better way with your Sister. — I am not so talkative.

Mar. Exquisite Devil! — Death, I am incens'd beyond all bounds of reason: I private with him! An Intrigue with me! Fury! thou know'st —

Emil. I do; — and to exasperate thy rage, will now confess all. I do love *Raphel* more than *Mlove* Fame: Nay, more than you could do, could you die for him — But why should that offend you?

Mar. Oh Confusion! I am all o'er Fire: Dare you be such a Devil? dare you love him?

Emil. Yes; and to vex you more, dare make you of my counsel.

Mar. Can I endure this? Oh for a look now of a Basilisk that I might kill thee.

Emil. Thou art worse. —

Mar. Expect to find me so; for if there be a stratagem of Malice in all Hell, I'll have it thence: Ah, I'll be a tender Sister to thee.

Emil. As ever woman yet was blest withal.

Mar. Not all the Infernals clad in the secret darkest Robes of Malice did ever watch a Soul they meant to ruine, as I will thee: Thy very sleeps shall be discover'd to me, and every dream I'll trace with so much care, that if thou scapest thou art the wiser Sister, and I a poor unthinking Creature good for nothing.

Emil. I slight thy threats, and dare thee to persevere: Manage thy hate with such dexterity; the World may wonder at thee, and confess thou hadst the practick part of Policy: Design thy plots so subtly, that the Devil should own himself out-done in his own Mystery; yet in the Arms of him I love, I'd laugh to see my Wit out-do'em!

Mar. Thy Wit? thy Wit compare with mine, indeed Fool!

Emil. Yes; and my prosperous Fate shall mount as far above thy shallow Stratagems.

Mar. I'll pull thee down from that ambitious height, and trample thee in Ashes.

Emil. Do.

Mar. Expect it.

Emil. And from that low recess I'll forge a plot shall blow thee into Air.

I'll make that Devil in thy Envy tame.

Mar. And if I fail there may I sink and dam. —

But I will not sink and dam, I will be a Devil in thy Envy tame.

The Third ACT.

*Enter Sneak and Mrs. Snare.**Sneak.* Nay! prethee, Pegg, have patience.*Snare.* Tell not me of patience, Sir, for my part I can stay no longer; you see my condition; if you will consider so; if not, Sir Roger shall know that the abuse of so innocent a person as I was, deserves better satisfaction.*Sneak.* Innocent!—'Sbud, she was a Scrumptious to the whole Colledge before I knew her: innocent, with a pox!*Snare.* Sir, do not grumble, nor say your Devils Part; *offer* to me, but give me money; Fifty Pounds I demand, which I think is reasonable enough considering the charge of my journey.*Sneak.* You might have staid till I came back again, I was not coming away.*Snare.* But I was, Sir, and so might you for any thing I know? Come, come, Sir, I am to be baffled no more; I am grown older now, make me thankful.*Sneak.* Ay, impudence, by Jerico: she has been snapt it seems for thirty,——but has now learnt cunning. Ah, plague of these Sciences, I say still!—Come wilt thou be civil? wilt thou take Twenty Pounds? Pox, use a little Conscience in thy dealings; thou wilt shew the better for't.*Snare.* I'll abate not a Farthing, Sir; Don't tell me of Conscience.*Sneak.* 'Sbud, would she were with Sex, and a Millstone about her neck: I must give it; for if my Uncle comes and sees her, I am undone.*Enter Betty.**Betty.* O Sir, what shall we do? Sir Roger, and my Master are just coming.*Sneak.* Oh unhappy minute! if he sees me I am lost for ever. No hole nor corner to hide us in, my little Rogue! 'Sbud, here's a Guinea for thee do but contrive handsomely.*Betty.* Well, Sir,——I see you are a Gentleman; therefore I'll help you: this door opens to my Ladies Chamber; there you may hide your selves;—and at night when it begins to grow dark, I'll come and let you out.*Sneak.* With all my heart! Oh I've an Ague on me!—*Exeunt.**Enter Ranger and Emilia.**Rang.* Are you still resolv'd?*Emil.* Assure your self I am and shall be ever.

Rang. Give me but hopes, and I'll forget all injuries, and ask your pardon.

Bubb. Fie, this from a Man of Wit, one that can plot so well? 'tis impossible: what would you have me do?

Rang. Desert young *Rashley*: Come, I beg thee do it.

Emil. Not for the World! Oh Heaven! I desert him! I love him, Sir,

Rang. Go on then, Devil, and if I don't plague thee!

Bubb. Now for the Venison, *Tom*! you'll stand to your Bargain?

Rash. Firmly, Sir, win it, and 'tis yours. — Ha! — what a Devil makes *Ranger* here?

Sir Rog. Madam, I hope you'll excuse my last abrupt departure: my nature, Madam, is merry, and in verity careless sometimes. I have not since I came to *England* achiev'd the Polite Method of Courtship, and addresses; but if blunt actions, kind Behaviour, and merry Songs can do it, I think I have shewn an example, have I not, old *Sigis*?

Emil. Iack, Sir, and 'tis right; let who will say the contrary; what does he say now? Madam, you may believe him.

Emil. Any thing, Sir, rather than put you to the trouble of an Apology.

Rash. What think you now, Sir? do you observe her angry Look? do but see what an Eye of indignation she casts upon me!

Bubb. Ay, ay, — I'll put out her Eye of indignation presently; I'll fetch her down with her haughty looks in a moment; I'll make her look as I'd have her, or I'll put her head into a Pudding-Bag.

Rang. O death, how she looks! here's another plot's hatching.

Bubb. Wife! I have brought honest *Tom* here to be reconcil'd to thee; and to take away all manner of distastes, he says he will give thee a Squirrell at any time, would thou not, *Tom*?

Rash. Sir, and my heart into the bargain, if she please to pardon me.

Bubb. Why, look ye now! — he's as honest a Fellow as I ever saw. Will you say that for him?

Emil. Sir, the affront he offer'd me was so contrary to my nature, and his behaviour so opposite to his Duty and Character, that to forgive him, would argue my Spirit as mean as by his late deportment one might judge his breeding.

Bubb. What! dare you be so refractory? — How! — do it, or by the Lord *Harry* I shall be very sharp upon you, that's in short.

Rang. Now all the fiends that dwell beneath the Center, And hourly study deeds subtle and horrid,

To sooth and snare the Souls ye mean to dam,

In favour of your Common-wealth appear,

And to be still more Devillish, obey my call.

The PLOITING SISTERS

Babb. Still refractory? Then thus, I break the Truce, and fall on you with my full power.

Rang. Sir, do you not see her artifice? This is nothing what she intends; 'tis all feign'd, and you are abused, by Heaven: Sir, there's nothing of this real.

Bubb. Ah! wou'd it were not. But *Ned*, thou canst talk well, prethee go and try if thou canst reconcile 'em; Faith I'll do as much for thee; prethee try.

Rang. Insufferable ignorance! No Brains! No sense of feeling! Sir, this is all dissimulation; and to carry on their design of abusing you.

Bubb. Why, peace, I say, not a word of this; 'sbud I shall lose my Venison by this Fools prating, if I let him alone a little longer. Wife, I command you once more, and instantly obey upon this Summons, or I'll turn you away like a Vagabond for contempt of my Government. Sir *Roger*! try you to persuade her; 'sbud this *Ned* here had lik'd to have spoil'd all; but what says *Seaggen*?

Emil. 'Tis hard to force lost friendship, to the blood when once 'tis banish'd.

Rang. Had she been bred a Witch she had lost half her Character.

Sir-Rog. Come, Madam! forget and forgive; 'tis necessary your Husband should be obey'd. Mr. *Rashly*, I am sorry to see you so distressed by the Ladies you us'd to be most in favour withal.

Rash. Not I: but you weigh my Merits in your own Scale, Sir *Roger*.

Sir-Rog. No faith, I am old now; but about some thirty years ago I could have said something; I could have fetch'd 'em about with a Horse-pox isail; I never flinch'd, I was a true Knight Errant, I.

Fumble. What ist he meabing of all this? Ifack I cannot guess the matter: but mum, I must not discover my failing.

Emil. Well, Sir, rather than be thought disobedient I will submit; but Heaven knows with what an ill will.

Bubb. Why so, now all's well: and the Venison's mine, — ha, ha, ha. — I thought I should have it; Faith, *Tom*, be civil, and kiss her, 'tis no confirmation else.

Rang. Oh dam him; dam him! I was ever such a Coxcomb?

Rash. 'Tis now about Five; at Seven I will not fail ye: Madam, you have given me new life with this favour.

Rang. At Seven? (good!) Thanks to my Ear for that discovery. I shall go near to spoil your assignation.

Bubb. Go now get you in, and begin a Set at Ombre, and I'll come and make one presently. By the Lord *Harry* I am glad they are friends with all my heart.

Ex. Sir Roger, Fumble, Rashly, Emilia smiling.

Enter Maria.

Rang. So *Patch* stole the Wife of *Admelant*; and *Trog* grew bright with *Fur*.

Bubb.

24 *The FOND-HUSBAND: or,*

Babb. Hey day! — *Trey!* why what hast thou to do with *Trey?*
Ned, prethee let us talk of our own affairs.

Mar. And wisely too; for your Reputation suspended one hour will grow nauseous; the Rabble will shout at ye, and point their fingers and by your Name you will grow infamous.

Enter Betty at door.

Babb. My Name, Sister? what dost mean? what name?

Mar. A Cuckold: Can you bear it, Sir? A Cuckold-Buz.

Babb. By the Lord *Harry* 'tis but a scurvy Name for a Man of Honour, that's the truth on't; but what is't to me?

Rang. Nothing, Sir, nothing; only you are the Man, that's all.

Babb. That's all, quoth'st? what a pox does he mean?

Mar. Dull Man! I blush to call ye Brother, that kind name, your want of sence taken from you: Can you see the guilty Love-twixt *Rashley* and your Wife, the melting Touches, and the glancing Eyes? the often Pressings, Sighs, and kind Caresses, and all the signs of shame and burning Lust, and yet be patient? Oh the insipid dulness of a Husband! A Husband.

Babb. *Rashley* and my Wife? Pish, — why, I reconcil'd 'em but just now; she has been angry with him this week for not giving her a Squirrel he promis'd her.

Rang. A Squirrel? — *Hah!* a very fine present that, if you understand all.

Betty. Happy discovery! this shall to my Lady immediately. *Ex.*

Mar. That anger was design'd; You are abus'd; and I that have a share in all your ignominy, have now resolv'd prevention. Oh that ever I shou'd live to be a Witness of this shame! *[Weeps.]* Heav'n knows how I have lov'd her, instructed her, and told her the Duty of a Wife was to obey and be constant; yet all would not do; therefore I am resolv'd to right my self and you in the discovery; nor shall our race in future times be branded with any Spacious Offspring.

Rang. I could not be believ'd; I was importun't; but if you knew what I have seen, Sir,

Babb. Seen! why prethee what hast thou seen, *Ned?*

Rang. Faith, 'twill be no secret long, therefore I'll tell you: I have seen her lie in *Rashley's* Arms and kiss him; play with his Nose, and clap his Cheeks, and laugh till her whole Frame was shook with Titillation; I guess, Sir 'twas at you, but will not swear. — She'd sing, and breath upon him, and with her Hand lockt fast in his, and Eyes with rapture gazing on his Face, she'd tell him wanton Stories of her love, and of her ease Husband. He to requite her, would dis-

play

play her Charms, and betwixt every word imprint a Kiss to prove his amorous Argument.

Bubb. And you have seen this?

Rang. More than this, Sir; I have seen (but to tell you is to be call'd Impertinent!) such things, such monstrous things.

Bubb. My Head begins to ache;—all is not well; prethee, Ned, out with 'em; come, I am the Friend; and 'sbud, if I thought any thing were done in Hugger Mugger.

Mar. What would you do then?

Bubb. Do!—Why, I'd ask him civilly whether this meaning were good or no.

Rang. His meaning?

Bub. Ay:—you know 'tis best to begin mildly, that after wards, if occasion be, a man may cut his Throat with greater assurance.

Mar. Stare on your Infamy with Eagle-aspect! Behold the evidence of Shame writ in her Eyes and Actions! See every Glance, each Touch, each kind Embrace; and when you have seen 'em in the very fact, stand coldly unconcern'd and ask the meaning. Ah! Curses upon all dulness.

Rang. Let *Rashley* smile and point his Fingers at ye, tell you a Story of a *Quondam* Mistress, (which is indeed your Wife) how oft he has lain with her, and pleasantly deceived the easie Cuckold;—yet as a President of excellent Nature, I cou'd advise you still to ask his meaning;—his meaning.

Mar. Watch all his Actions; and when some kind Genius has, to undeceive you, made you a Spectator of *Rashley*, full of hopes, and all undrest, entering your Bed with a glad Lovers haste, step in, and pull him back, and ask his meaning, his meaning!

Bubb. My Bed! my Bed is my Castle; and, by the Lord *Harry*, he that violates it but with a look, my Fist, shall crush him into Mummy.

Rang. So! now he begins to take fire.

Bubb. He's a Son of a Whore, a Dog, a Bitch, a Stuccubus; and if I find this true, I'll cut him piece-meal though he were Sword-proof, and had a Witch to his Mother.

Mar. Ay, this is meaning now! Go on and prosper.

Rang. These words display a reviv'd sense of Honour, nor shall you want encouragement to forward it; and since I see your Eyes and Understanding are open'd, I, as your Friend, will give this secret to you: 'Twas my good fortune to hear an Assignment appointed between 'em this night at seven a Clock; I guess 'tis now very near the hour; you have a Key to the Chamber, go thither at the time appointed; and then never trust your Friend if you find her not the falsest of Women.

Bubb. If I do, I'll make her the ugliest in Christendom; for I'll cut off her Nose, and send her to the Devil for a New Years Gift.

Mar. Here she comes, we must not be seen; 'twill spoil all; talk of going!

going abroad, and carry it handfomly, for fear she mistrusts.

Bubb. But where shall we meet?

Rang. At my lodging in the Strand, about half and hour hence

Enter Emilia.

Emil. What, studying, my Dear? Come, come, indeed you must not be so thoughtful: Did you not promise to come and make one at Ombre.

Bubb. Now if I might be hang'd, cannot I speak an angry word, no: — I wont play; I am busie, I am going abroad for two or three hours, — Farewel.

Emil. 'Tis so; our Intrigue to night is discover'd, to him, I find by his actions; the Infernal-Colleagues, *Ranger* and *Maria*, have been possessing him with some strange resolutions: But since 'tis but what I expected, it gives me the less trouble, and 'tis ten to one but I have a Counterplot; lest that shall undo their policies, tho' the Devil made one in the Invention. Did you meet my Husband?

Enter Rashley.

Rash. Yes, but in a strange humour: He looks with so dull an aspect and return'd my salute so coldly, and so far from his usual manner, that I more than half fear — our Intrigue is discover'd.

Emil. Without doubt it is: — They have plaid their parts to discover, and it now belongs to us to study to repel. Come, summon your Wits together, and advise what's to be done in so Critical a Conjunction you had a contriving Genius once.

Rash. Ay, 'tis true, Madam, I had once, but this dam'd Cham-paigne has so dull'd it, that I gad 'tis now worth little or nothing: Madam, you know my Talent in plot is insignificant; but if a Ram-courter, or cutting *Ranger's* Throat may do the business I'll thrust my hand as far as any man, and I'll spoil his plotting by Heaven, say you but the word.

Emil. No! fighting will do in any other business better than this, for in stead of defending it blasse my reputation.

Rash. The Devil take me, if I had not like to have forgot that too, well, I am a dull Rogue, Madam, what's the truth on't.

Enter Betty.

Betty. Oh Madam, you are betray'd / Mr. *Ranger*, by what means Heav'n knows, has been inform'd of your assignation, I accidentally overheard him telling it to my Master, and Madam *Maria* coming on, seconded his Story with an extravagant story; and in conclusion with design'd that he should pretend business abroad, but privately return to me and surprize ye.

Emil.

Emil. 'Tis as I imagin'd, and I am glad of this caution: Now we may take breath again.

Rash. But is there no way to keep on the plot, and deceive 'em still?

Emil. 'Tis in my head, and will have birth presently. — *Betty,* you have *Shank* still fast in my Chamber?

Betty. Yes, Madam, he's securely lockt in, and here's the Key.

Emil. Follow me then, and do as I directed you: In the mean time, *Sir*, go you to your Chamber, and put on your Gown and Night-Cap as if you had been in Bed; and when you hear me stamp, come out, and wonder: Let me alone for the rest. — I'll plague 'em with an after-plot. Away, the minute's near. — [Ex. *Emil.* and *Betty.*

Rash. What she intends I know not, but am certain of the success by the assurance she does it with. — Hah! 'Tis a rare Creature, and by Heav'n is Mistress of the sweetest Nature, and noblest Trust, and most substantial good English Principles of any Woman in Europe. Well, — if Cuckolding be a Crime, 'tis the sweetest Crime in Christendom, and has certainly the most Practisers. But let that pass; now to my Gown and Night-Cap. [Exit.

Enter Sir Roger, Fumble, Cordelia, and Servant.

Sir Rog. 'Sdeath! I have had confounded luck to night; — not a good chance since I begun; nor no Mirth neither, there's the plague on't. — Had I had the liberty to have sung two or three merry Catches, and have lost my Money with a Trolly Lolly. — Lo, — it had been nothing. — Here, — Hey; — where's Cob, call him hither quickly, and let us go.

Servant. Sir I have not seen him these two hours; I believe he's gone home.

Sir Rog. How! what without taking leave of his Mistress? 'tis impossible.

Fumble. Sir *Rog.*, you are disturb'd methinks: what is the matter? Hah! your behaviour seems to publish that.

Sir Rog. No great matter, Sir: Pox o' this old Fool.

Cord. Sir, it will become a person of your gravity to be angry on so small an occasion.

Sir Rog. Small! by Heav'n, Madam, — 'tis a matter of moment: What, run away without taking leave? In verity 'tis barbarous, and derogates from his Birth and Breeding; nor can I, though his Kinsman, excuse —

Fumble. What does *Sir Rog.* say, Madam? does he rally. Hah! he's a merry Man, and a good Fellow, and ifack I love mirth: for my part I hate your drowsy, insipid, dogmatick Fellows, that sleep over a Glass, and talk of nothing but State-Politics: — But *Sir Rog.* is a man

a man for the purpose, a merry jolly-man, He.

Sir Rog. Sir, you may spare your Comendations for them that do light in 'em. What an impertinent old fellow 'tis?—Pray Sir, no more of this, I am not pleased with it.

Fumb. Your Song of *Sir Thomas Fairfax*, and the rest of the brave old Fellows, was very fine, *Sir Roger*.—Well! I'll not be positive, but there was certainly a great deal of Judgment and sheer Wit in some of those Rump-Songs.

Sir Rog. 'Sdeath! this is the most insufferable old Fellow: Fox, tell not me of Rump-Songs: Sir in Verity, would you had been hang'd up in stead of the Rump,—that I might have been free from the noise.——But, Madam, as I was saying,——upon my Honour I never knew *Cob* in such an error.

Fumb. Then, *Sir Roger*, Chevy-Chace, and the Hunting of the Hare, is finely penn'd! finely penn'd! Ifack it was.

Sir Rog. Oh the Devil, is there no riddance of this! Clack! because he can hear nothing, he would speak all.

Fumb. Ay so it was, Sir, so it was.——But Ifack that Hunting was most excellently contriv'd: Ah! he makes the Dogs speak notably. *Jock*: and the Hare repartees agen very well for an Animal of her Magnitude.

Sir Rog. 'Sbud, I shall grow as deaf as he if I stay longer: I must go seek my Nephew: Come, Madam, let's go away and leave him; I am sure his Eyes are so defective he can't miss us presently.——*Exit.*

Fumb. solus. And tho' some petulant, insignificant, and disaffected persons have rais'd Calumnies by calling it Doggrel and Fustian; and such like; yet Ifack the thing is really a witty, facetious, (nay, and as some think) a Moral Satyr: for mark me, *Sir Roger*, and Madam pray give your attention, for the Dogs were Hieroglyphick-Characters of Fanaticks, as the Hare was of the Quakers, and ifack I have often heard the Sisters sing it instead of an Hymn or an Anthem, for the Conversion of Unbelievers; and nay, and as a greater rarity I have heard it acted to the life betwixt a Dog Phanaetick and a Quany-Quaker.

But ifack,——I think you mind me not.——Ha, *Sir Roger*, Madam,——*Sir Roger*, Madam,——what a vacuity?——Gone? well——

[*Full Court Speechless.*]
I'll after, and redeem all; but *Jock*, this was a little uncivil. *Exit.*

Enter Ranger, Betty with a Candle for it on the Table.

Betty. Come, Sir, and with as little noise as you can for fear of discovery. I swear were you not a man, to whom I am sensibly oblig'd, I should not be drawn to this Infidelity.

Rog. I will reward thy care; are they together?

Betty. Yes, Sir, in that Room there. [Pointing to the little door.]

Rang.

Rang. Take this, and begone, I have no further service for thee, and I would have her ignorant that this is thy discovery: Away.

Betty. The discovery will add little to your content: but since I have the profit, I care not. *[Aside.]* *Ex.*

Enter Bubble and Maria.

Bubb. Ned! what says she? are they met?

Rang. Securely, and with a great deal of content, they are in that Room in the dark, (met!) Ah, Sir! they are both better practis'd than ever to be tardy in a Love-Intrigue.

Mar. Now I think I have trap'd her finely. — Oh my Joy! — I shall not be able to contain my self. *[Aside.]*

Bubb. A Man of Wit and Honour thus abused! 'Tis horrible! A Cuckold! 'Sbud, 'tis a worse Name than a Conjuror, — and has more of the Devil in't: — but I'll be so reveng'd the World shall tremble at it: I'll first cut off her Hair, to affront her Family; then the want of a Nose shall proclaim her Bawd, and the Penny Pot-Poets shall make Ballads on her. *Exit.*

Rang. So! this thrives as I would have it, and we have snapt 'em finely in the nick! just when the Intrigue was at its best perfection! Oh Revenge! —

Mar. Ha, ha, ha! Nay, and at such a time when all help is deny'd 'em; when her Blisses, Sighs and Entreaties are all fruitless; when her exasperated Husband's rage flows high, and best of all when *Rashly* is defenceless. O Wit! I love thee for this Stratagem!

Rang. She dar'd us to persevere; slighted our plots, and had the confidence to make descriptions of her kind Intrigue before her Husband's face, then laugh'd at us.

Mar. 'Tis now our time; Ha, ha, ha, I thought I could not fail.

Rang. No; and this happy Minute brings me more perfect pleasure, and more true delight, than pristine Ages; For she's one whom Hell design'd for its chief instrument; She will out-lye a Syren, cheat the Devil, and dam more Souls to further her Intrigue than *Charm's* Boat has room for; yet I own a kind of Mungrel love, and must enjoy her tho' Legions were her guard. *[Aside.]*

Mar. Hark! — *[A knock within.]* He's as good as his word: Now I hope she'll own her Sisters Wit above her. Well! — this was rarely plotted.

Rang. By Heav'n it was, — and fit to be Chronicled, Madam: — Your Wit surpasses humane thought, and should be spoken of with wonder: You plot with such assurance, that —

Enter Emilia.

Hell! Death! and Confusion! Can I believe my Eyes? She here!

Mar. I am confounded, and have lost my senses. Sure, Sir, we dream: Are we awake, think you?

Emil. No! nor shall never wake when I design to raise my Wit above the poor weak Creatures. I could laugh now, but I swear I pity ye. Wear out your tedious Nights in dull design, and then i'th' Morning hatch the Abortive Brood which ere Night turns to nothing; slender Encouragment Heav'n knows, for Wit: And you, Sir, plot and swear, and plot agen for Moon-shine in the Water; Poor reward, Sir, for one so well skill'd in Intrigue as you are!

Mar. Oh that I had thy heart here in my hand! How pleasant were the Diet? — Fate and Death! was ever such a Devil?

Range. No! never! Therefore since thou art a Devil, as I now am sure thou art, have mercy on me, and do not take my Soul for my first Crime, — and I will plot no more. Thou art my Conquerour; I'll honour thee; — Good Devil do not hurt me. — [Something within.]

Enter Bubble dragging in Snare.

Bubb. Strumpet! Whore! Witch! I'll spoil your Gurls by the Lord Harry. O Lord! my Wife; — and she that I have beaten a stranger.

Snare. Oh Heav'n! was ever poor sinner so abused? — [Weeps.]

Bubb. Madam, I beg your pardon. [Bubble looks uneasily at his wife, then at Snare, then at a but I'll make you amends presently. — Look of black hair in his hand.]

Range. Well, nothing but the greatest Devil could have brought this Woman hither for this Intrigue, and therefore once more I acknowledge thy Power. — [To Emilia kneeling.]

Bubb. Ay! you had need ask her pardon: 'tis you have betray'd us. Chicken! dear Chicken, — don't frown so: — I confess I was a Fool; — but forgive me but this once, and if ever I offend agen, I'll give thee leave to Cuckold me indeed.

Emil. Indeed, Sir, your jealousy is a little severe. I wonder what I have done to deserve it.

Bubb. Nothing. I know thou hast not; prethee forgive me.

Emil. But to be disturb'd thus when I was at my Devotion.

Bubb. Prethee forget it: Come, Tom, you may come out now here's none but Friends.

Emil. Who do you mean, Sir? — [Stamps with her foot.]

Bubb. Tom Rashley — Poor Fellow, I warrant now he'll be so bashful.

Range. So, that's something yet, and I'll fetch him out or bleed for it. —

Ex.

Enter Rashley at the other side.

Emil. Look yonder he is!

Mar.

The PLOTTING SISTERS.

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Mar. I find it now, — and this is all design'd: O Devil! Devil!

Enter Sir Roger after Rashley.

Sir Rog. What's the matter, Mr. Rashley? what's the matter.

Bubb. Rashley here? Hey day! who the Devils is that yonder then?

Enter Ranger dragging out Sneak.

Rang. Come, Sir, appear; I find you are now no *Hercules*. Hah.—
Death more Miracles, *Sneak*!

Sir Rog. 'Sdeath, my *Cob*! — and taken with a *Wench*? Why how now, *Sirrah*?

Emil. Now it works to my will; — prethee observe how they look!

Rash. Hush, I do.

Sneak. O Lord, Uncle, your mercy! — I was betray'd, seduc'd, as a man may say. — Go, go, — begone, I'll speak with you to-morrow. [To *Sneak*.]

I say, Uncle. I was seduc'd, — how seduc'd, —

Sir Rog. Catcht with a *Wench*? — Come, Sir, I'll talk with you.

Oh disgrace to the Family! — With a *Wench*? — a low *Wench*!

Come along, Sir; — I'll watch you henceforth. [Ex. *Sir Rog.* *Sneak*.]

Rash. Ha, ha! — Why, here has been a great deal of *Intrigue* to-night

I see, Ha, Sir? — I am sorry now I went to Bed to soon! — But I have

been in the sweetest Dream yonder. [Ex. *Rash.*]

Bubb. Here has indeed been a great deal of *Intrigue*, as thou sayst,

Tom! But no matter; now all's well! And since it has happen'd so

well, a Day of Jubilee shall Crown it! — Tomorrow is my *Wedding*-

Day, and in memory of that happy hour that conjoin'd me and my

sweet *Chicken* there together, we'll have a *Feast*; — and I'll sing,

and roar, and drink *cum privilegio*. — Go, wait on her in, *Tom*!

Chicken, remember we are *Friends*; — Go, — I'll be with you pre-

sently. [Ex. *Rashley* bowing scornfully at *Ranger* and *Maria*.]

Rang. Never was such a Day, nor such a Deed.

Bubb. Nod! let me have no more of your doubts nor counsels.

D'ee hear! 'Sbud, I say once more my *Wife* is the honestest *Woman*

in *Christendom*, and you shall hear from me! [Ex. *Bubble*.]

Mar. Was ever the like known?

Rang. Never since *Adam*; but she was a *Devil* before the *Creation*.

Mar. I'll not give over this.

Rang. Nor I.

Mar. Your hand on't.

Rang. Here! and may all the *Demons* that have power

In subtle plots help now; they'll never more.

Maria

Mr. I'll die but I'll perform it,
My Sights shall with Immortal Wit be wrought;
And all my Sences shall convert to Thought.

Ex Ambo.

The Fourth ACT.

Enter Sir Roger and Sneak.

Sir Rog. Sirrah! haunt me no more, I know thee, not.
Sneak. Nay, Uncle.

Sir Rog. Go to your Wench, and let her entertain you; then flock
Sir Rog. *Sneak's* Manner, hoofs at home with Bastards, Birds of night,
and teach 'em all to know their Father when you ha' done.
Sneak. Good Uncle, let me speak.

Sir Rog. No place to bring your Cattle to but thither, under your
Mistresses Nose, thou most notorious Ass? Mercy o'me, what will this
World come to? who could imagine that Sheeps Face of thine; that
Mouth whence he'er came any thing that had sense; that Person that
thas oft been thought a Rascal as thou hast been a Fool? Then that
hanging Dog looks I'll say no more, but the Devil is subtle.

Sneak. Uncle, you know 'tis an old saying, We cannot appoint our
own Destinies; nor did I foresee this: besides, Sir, if you knew her
as well as I do, you'd find, the Woman has some parts that are not
contemtable. I shud, I know what's what, I am not such a Fool.

Sir Rog. Not such a Fool? In verity if thou wert but a grain nearer
to Natural, I'd beg thee of the King, and adopt another to inherit
thy Estate. Not such a Fool!

Sneak. No, so I say, Sir, since you go that: Whoop! what a Pox
you have forgot since you were young your self.

Sir Rog. I young! why, Sir, I hope I got no Bastards.

Sneak. Not. But you kept Whores that you did, and that's all
one, *bona fide*.

Sir Rog. This Rogue has heard all; I must stop his mouth. How,
Sirrah, kept Whores?

Sneak. It has been thought so, Sir, since you go to that: Nay, 'tis no
such Miracle now adays; there's many an old Badger about Town
that's the like; it's a common custom now.

Sir Rog. But 'tis not so customary with you, Uncle, Sir; but come,
pray express your self, what Women do the infamous World lay to my
charge?

Sneak. What Women? I know not, Sir, I am ignorant. *Hum. Nay, Rogg.*
Joan of the Dairy, Sunday Jenny, Datchet, Adity, Bridget.

Sir

Sir Rog. Hold ! hold, I say ; 'Sdeath he'll reckon the whole Country presently : I must quiet him, the Rogue has me upon the hip. *Harkee, Cob.*

Sneak. Then the Parsons Wife, Sir, and the old Hostess at the Towns end : You see the Fool has a good memory.

Sir Rog. A waggish one I see thou hast : Ha, if thou could'st remember Law Cases as well, thou would'st be a brave Fellow. Why, *Cob*, thou think'st thou hast paid me off now, dost not ?

Sneak. I know not, if my Wit flow too fast, Sir, I cannot help it ; 'tis a good that's thrown upon me, 'tis not my seeking ; 'tis true, I have an unhappy way with me sometimes, but 'tis over presently, it never lasts long, that's one comfort.

Sir Rog. In verity I see thou hast Wit, and now I'll cherish it. Why, *Cob*, my instruction is for thy good, Child, what will thy Mistake think when he hears of it ? — Come, come, in verity, *Cob*, 'twas in done, 'twas in faith. — But mum, no more words on't, I'll make all well again.

Sneak. So, so, I have brought him about finely ; 'Sbud I did not think I had so much Wit, but I see a man may be mistaken in his own parts.

Sir Rog. But d'ee hear, *Cob*, not a word more of these Wenches, let the foolish World say what it will. — Thou art a good Boy in verity, I like thy Wit well : Thou know'st I have no Hen, and when I die, *Cob*, I will not say I'll give thee any thing, lest I should make thee proud ; but expect, expect wonders may fall, who knows ?

Sneak. By *Verico*, I would not have spoke on't now, but that I had nothing else to say, and you know 'tis a disgrace to a Scholar to be silent in company.

Sir Rog. 'Tis no matter, 'tis no matter : prethee how cam'st thou to know that *Pegg* and I were so intimate ?

Sneak. Ah, you'll be angry if I shou'd tell you.

Sir Rog. In verity not I : — Angry ? — Come, come, out with it, *Cob*, out with it.

Sneak. Why, the truth is, I lay with her one night, and the Queen told me all.

Sir Rog. Didst thou ? God a mercy. (Dam him ! what a Snake have I foster'd ?) Done like a Cock o'th' Game in verity. Ah, when I was of thy years I cou'd have done as much my self.

Sneak. Yes, she told me you had done as much ! but mum, Sir, not a word more, I know my Kew.

Sir Rog. 'Sdeath, I shall be a by-word to th' Town. — How now ?

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Sir *Roger*, I was just coming to your House for you ; my Master desires yours and Mr. *Sneak's* company immediately.

Sir

24 **The FOND-HUSBAND: or,**

Sir Rog. What the Solemnity holds? this is his Wedding-Day.

Serv. Yes, Sir.

Sir Rog. Tell him I am coming. — **Ex. Servant.**
Come, Cob, let us go; and mum, d'ee hear, you understand me?

Sneak. I warrant you, Sir. — **Exit.**

SCENE 2.

Bubble, Emilia, Maria, Ransley, Ranger, Cordella,
Fumble sitting at a Table.

Bubble. Come, come, another Bumper about; my Chickens Health:
Here, I am not wet through yet; **Tom**, what sayst thou?

Rash. With all my heart, Sir! Oh here comes Sir Roger, and his Ne-
phew. — **Enter Sir Roger and Sneak.**

Sir Rog. Mr. Bubble and Gentlemen, your most humble Servant.

Bubble. Yours, Good Sir Roger; I am glad to see you ifaith; and you,
twice Mr. Sneak. Well, Faith, Sir Roger, we have been Bumping it
about here, we have been dipp, as the saying is, **Tom Ransley**, send it
round; come, Sir Roger's a Freshman, he'll drink an Ocean.

Rash. Fill every Man's Glass there: Mr. Ranger, you want it, 'tis
Madam Emilia's health.

Rang. I'll do you reason, Sir: — **All drink.**
And ten to one but I have a stratagem shall dash his mirth. **Alas!**
Are they ready?

Mar. Hush! we are observ'd; they are —

Bubb. So, so! Come, now the Song, and then the Dance. Look ye,
Gentlemen, you must know —

Fumb. Come, come, Mr. Bubble, let's have t'other Soop, I say; ifack
we lose time. Ah Sirrah, are you there? Gad I'll be with you pre-
sently; dust it about once more, I say; the Wine has a pretty smack
with't — it cherishes, I like it well: come another Soop, and then
do what you will.

Bubb. Fill Wine there, Gentlemen, (as I was saying) I got this
Song made purposely, 'tis in praise of Marriage, and there was not one
ready made of 'em in Town; I searcht it all over.

Rang. Were you at the Poets Lodging?

Bubb. Yes, but that had none; for they told me 'twas a Song would
not take: besides, they were so busy getting Plays up for the next
Term, that I could hardly get one made.

Sir Rog. Sir, you need not have troubled 'em; you once had a very
good Vein that way your self.

Bubb. Yes, I was mightily given to rapture and flame once: I writ
Tom

Tom Parthing: — I had a hand two in *Colly my Cow*, a Song that took well I can assure you; but this is of another kind in praise of Marriage, Sir; and they told me the Town lov'd nothing but Satyrs against Marriage, and the reason was because they were afraid of being Cuckolded: — When, alas, poor silly Rogues, there's no such thing in Nature.

Rang. Well, of all stupid Animals a drowfie Husband is the most notorious: — but I shall change your note presently I doubt not, Sir. — [Aside.]

Bubb. You shall hear, Gentlemen: Hey, the Song there and the Dance?

SONG.

Under the Branches of a spreading Tree,
Silvander sate, from care and danger free,

And his inconstant roving humour shows,

To his dear Nymph, that sung of Marriage-Vows:

But she with flowing Graces charming Air,

Cry'd; *Fie, fie, my Dear, give ear,*

And tempt the gods no more!

But thy offence with penitence repair:

For though Vice in a Beauty seem sweet in thy Arms,

An Innocent Virtue has always more Charms.

Ab Phillida! the angry Swain reply'd,

Is not a Mistress better than a Bride?

What Man that Universal Yoke retains,

But meets an hour to sigh and curse his chains?

She smiling cry'd, Change, change that impious Mind;

Without it we could prove not half the joys of Love.

For Marriage makes the feeling joys Divine;

For all our Life long we from scandal remove,

And we last fall the Trophies of Honour and Love.

Bubb. Well sung ifaith: Look'ee, Gentlemen, is it not as I told you?

Sw. Rang. In verity very well, very well, Sir.

Bubb. Come, now the Dance. — [Dance.]

Enter Servants.

Serv. Sir, here's a Letter for you; it was left by a Porter, who said it requir'd an answer, and is gone.

Rang.

Rang. So now for a change of Countenance.—I think this will do.
Mar. If not, I've writ a Letter that will; but let's observe.—

A DANCE.

Bubb. What the Devil has this Fellow given me here? A Letter?
 Pray Heav'n it be no challenge.—How?—What's here?

Reads. Sir, That you are blind, I have heard; that you are a Fool, I know; and that you are a Cuckold, I believe.—However, as a Friend, tho' unknown, I am bound in Conscience to give you this Information; Your Wife is false; You are abus'd; The Author of your wrong you know as well as your self, if you know your self as well as you know Rashley.

Oh Heav'n! was ever such fate?—But hush, I'll smother my resentment till they are gone.—Come, Sir Roger and Gentlemen, there's a Tongue in the next Room, pray go and eat?—I'll be with you presently.—
Ex. all but Bubbie, Ranger and Maria.

Rang. So I see by this behaviour it takes, and I'll away, lest he should suspect me—Now for my t'other plot.

Bubb. O Sister, here's a new discovery; the Devil is come abroad agen.

Mar. How? the Devil?

Bubb. Ay, in the likeness of a Letter: Here, prethee read it; 'tis his Character; I am sure it looks as if 'twere writ with a Cloven Hoof.

—Hah!—what think'st thou?

Mar. Sir, he calls you Fool here.

Bubb. Ay, he's a little uncivil, that's the truth on't: but what's to be done, Sister?

Mar. A Cuckold too.

Bubb. Ay;—was ever such an impudence?

Mar. I never heard of any: but 'as no more, Sir, than I expected: Alas! 'tis nothing to be a Cuckold now.

Bubb. Oh unfortunate estate of Marriage! by the Lord Harry, if this be true, I have prais'd it to fine purpose. But, Sister, thou wert wont to be kind; prethee advise me.

Mar. 'Tis to no purpose, Sir, you know I am envious, my words have double meaning: I did my Sister wrong in my last Story, pray let me offend no more.

Bubb. Well, I confess I was to blame; but who the Devil cou'd have mistrusted her, when the plot was carried so handfomly?

Mar. Oh you will find, Sir, she has still more plots, and I find you so credulous and so wedded to your infamy, that for my part I am afraid to have any thing to do with it.

Bubb.

Babb. Help me: but this once, and if I fail thee agen, may I be prov'd a Cuckold to the whole County, and my Case try'd in *Westminster-Hall*.

Mar. Well! once more then I'll assist you, and to confirm what that Letter has inform'd, — know, Sir, she is false; and tho' she frustrated our last plot by her Waiting-Womans means, she certainly met *Raffley* that night — I am glad you credit a Strangers Letter; for my part I love her so well, I should have hardly caus'd a second breach between ye else; but since 'tis out, and you desire my assistance, follow me, and ere night I doubt not but to give you sufficient proof of your misfortune.

Babb. With all my heart, dear Sister. — 'Sbud, a Cuckold? — Tis impossible, I ha' no Cuckolds face; — but I'll be resolv'd immediately. — [Exit.]

Enter Ranger and Governess.

Rang. Do this, thou shalt command me.

Gov. In truth, Sir, I am afraid 'twill be discover'd, and I would not have my Lady know it for the World.

Rang. I swear she never shall. What, dost thou doubt me? Besides, I'll be so grateful to thee, thou shalt never have cause to repent this Courtship —

Gov. Sir, you know you always might command me in any reasonable thing: pray speak it agen, Sir, what would you have me do?

Rang. Why only plant me in or near her Chamber for a design I have, she shall be ignorant why, — or by what means I got thither; I'll still be careful of thy reputation: Come, take this Purse, and prethee do it willingly.

Gov. Well, Sir, what you mean I know not; but Heav'n direct all for the best: I can deny you nothing, Sir; I lie in a Closet that joyns to her Chamber, where you may both over-hear and speak to her. —

Rang. That above all things I prethee let's go.

Gov. But for Heav'n's sake take care she knows not that I brought ye thither; I would not be seen in such a business for the world. —

Rang. Ne'er doubt, I warrant thee I'll be careful.

Gov. Follow me then, Sir. — [Exit.]

SCENE 33

Enter Fumble and Spatterdash.

Fumb. *S. Par.* Sirrah!

Spas. Here, Sir, here.

Fumb. Whither is this Rascal gone? Well, ifuck, I am too full of clemency

38 *The FOND HUSBAND: &c.*

clemency; I must swinge this Rogue, or he'll never be good for any thing; he's at Nine-holes now, I'll lay my life: A damn'd Villain, that spends me Three-pence a day I know not how.

Spat. O Lord, who I, Sir?

Fumb. Who's within there? what, will no body hear me? Am I left desolate? I have not the plague I think. — Ha!

Spat. Why here am I, Sir; I have been here all this while.

Fumb. Oh Sirrah, are you come? where have you been ha? I lay, where have you been Rogue?

Spat. No where, Sir, nor I.

Fumb. Sirrah! I must be left alone! must I! — and, when I have a message to send, go my self. — Hah! — Sirrah, Mr. Little Pox has a Boy, that tho' he was stinted at Nurse, and is not above pocket-high, can run, and frisk, and jump upon occasion. Sirrah, know, a Bayly by his Nose, and a Wench by her Buttocks, ye Rogue, and a good Linguist, and a pretty Pimp, Sirrah, and can hold the Door with a steady hand, ye Rogue: but thou, a Rascal, a Drone, art good for nothing.

Spat. Any thing, Sir, I warrant you: try me, and you shall find I can hold a Door as well as he.

Fumb. Why, how now, Sirrah? what, make mouths at me? is your Master grown your mirth? Ha, this will teach you better; this will new-mold you; I'll fetch you out of your damn'd looks ifack. French Grimaces, Rogue, French Grimaces. — [Beats him.]

Spat. O Lord, what shall I do? Because he's deaf, and cannot hear me, he thinks I mock him. — Hold, Sir, — for Heaven's sake; upon my Faith I don't mock you; — [Aloud.] 'Tis all a mistake; and, Sir, you have beaten me for nothing.

Fumb. What a noise the Rogue makes! Why, Sirrah, cannot you speak temperately, but you must roar thus? I am not so deaf, but I can hear without this Thunder-clap. But you do it in contempt, do you Sirrah? Bless, us, to what an impudence this Age is grown! But I'll fetch the Devil out, lest he should grow in ye, — thus, — [Beats him.] I should be loth to see thee hang'd till you come to years of discretion.

Spat. Mercy o' me, what a Master have I! If I stay long here I shall be beaten into Mummy.

Fumb. Come, Sir, now I have perform'd the part of a Master, and a Friend in your Castigation, I have now a word or two by way of Instruction. Mark me, Sirrah, — nothing exasperates more than scorn, nor nothing pleases more than observance; a Master should be strict in finding occasion to Beat his Servant, and a Servant should be careful in avoiding the beatings of his Master.

Spat. So, he has taught me, now I shall be careful of avoiding it hereafter if my legs will carry me.

Fumb. What, mouths agen, Sirrah, mouths agen?

Spat.

Spat. Umph. ———— *[Makes a low Congee.]* *Says nothing.*
Fumb. Oh this submission pacifies: Come hither, I have a message for ye, and let me see how you can behave your self; 'tis a matter of moment.

Spat. I'll do my best to please ye, Sir.

Fumb. What dost thou say now? ———— Look, look! ———— was ever such a Rascal as this? This Rogue knows well enough that I cannot hear him. ———— Sirrah, come and lay your mouth to my ear, and then I speak, if you would have me understand ye.

Spat. Yes, Sir, I shall be very careful to remember it hereafter.

Fumb. Rasters? ———— what Rasters, Rogue? ———— of avoided I.

Spat. Sir, I shall be careful to remember it hereafter.

Fumb. O shall you so, Sir? and I will become your ifack. ———— For look see, Sirrah, 'tis my humour as long as I am healthy and jovial, to cover failings and imperfections in Nature as well as I can; 'tis a Wise man's virtue, and I have paterns for't every day. Ah! here are a sort of jolly, brisk, ingenious, old Signiors about Town, that with false Calves, false Bellies, false Teeth, false Noses, and a false steering Face, upon the matter fill up Society as well as we a Masquerading Pop of 'em all. ———— But to the matter: Sirrah, you must carry this Ring to Cordelia, and possess her with my love in an elegant manner: Stand there, and let me see how you can carry your self in such a business.

Spat. Thus, Sir: I had my Honours from the Dancing School.

Fumb. O damn'd Rogue! what a Bow's there? 'tis worse than a Country Counsellors to a Client that has no money. ———— Sirrah, ———— pull me your Hat off thus, ———— with a Grace: ———— Ah! I cou'd have done it rarely twenty years ago; ———— but ifack Time and Gravity defaces all things. ———— Come, Sirrah.

Spat. Madam! my Master too well knowing the Charms of your Wit and Beauty are too sharp at all times to be be opposed, has by me sent this Ring, and humbly desires ————

Fumb. Well, that last Honour was pretty well: ———— but come now, I let's hear what you can say?

Spat. 'Sdeath! he has not heard me all this while; ———— what shall I do? ———— *[Knocking.]*

Oh some-body knocks; this was happy: Sir, there's some-body at door to speak with you.

Fumb. Go see who 'tis, I'll follow. ———— This is a plaguy dull Rogue, but I must have patience, and take pains with him. ———— Nor shou'd he do any thing in this business had I not a design in't; and ifack I like the Woman well; ———— she's young, and plump; free to her Nature, and and of a Sanguine Complexion, and *bona fide*, I never see her but some secret motions in my blood seem to imply that she is the cause. ———— What? I am not Bedrid; ———— I can dance yet, ay, and run and jump too if

40 **THE SECOND HUSBAND: OR,**
it must, it must;—mine was ever a stirring Family:—it must, I say,
and the shall know it suddenly.—— *Ex. Fumble.*

SCENE 4.

Enter Maria and Bubble.

Mar. **C**ome softly, Sir, and plant your self here at this back-door;
I have already made a discovery.

Bubb. Are they together?

Mar. I believe so; they seldom miss such an opportunity, especially
when they think you absent.

Bubb. No; they are politick with a pox to 'em: Sister, what re-
venge, ha? I am resolv'd to be a Tyrant: 'Sbud I'll pinch her to death
with a pair of Tongues.

Mar. O fie, that will be too cruel.

Bubb. Cruel? by the Lord *Harry* 'tis Justice.—— palpable Justice!
Why, shou'd she live, she'd Cuckold the whole Nation.

Mar. Consider better on't, 'tis but a venial Crime, and deserves not
such rigour.—— But come,——meditate of no revenge till you are cer-
tain of the fault:——keep close at that door, be sure you discover not
your self till I come to you; I'll go and observe.

Bubb. I'll try my patience;——but 'tis a damn'd Cause.—— *Exeunt.*

Enter Rastley and Emilia. Scene a Bed Chamber.

Emil. Our Intrigue as yet goes well.

Rast. I swear to admiration; and had I not seen each passage, I
shou'd have thought it had been impossible, Oh my Dearest! how shall
I gratifie thee? My love's too poor, and my desert too mean ever to
equal it.—— *[Kisses her hand.]*

Enter Ranger.

Rang. I am glad I've got air agen; this damn'd old Gib-Cat has
mew'd me this half hour into such a hole, that had I staid a minute
longer I had certainly been smother'd; it stinks worse than a Potho-
maries Shop, and is furnisht with nothing but Gally-pots full of rusty
Oyl, into which groping about I often thrust my Fingers.——Fough!—
Affair'd, as I live!——a most intolerable stink!——Ah! the
Devil grind her old Chops.——Stay?—this is *Tune Emilia's* Chamber,
and if I am not mistaken, I heard a whispering here;—it may be they're
together.——I'll be still and listen.

Rast. Our love shall last whole Ages, and each Kiss add new and
fierce desires: Death shall want power to separate us, and Envy deap
and pine it self away to see its stratagem succeed no better.

Rang.

Rang. By Heav'n 'tis so;—They are here:—Blest minute! now I shall make a rare discovery.

Emil. I am confirm'd, and will proceed in loving. A Husband is a dull insipid thing, pall'd and grown stale within a week: But a Lover appears still new and gay, and is to perpetuity the same he was at first,—all mirth,—all pleasure.

Rang. A most excellent Theme:—Oh that that Property, that Fool her Husband, stood now to hear this Devil of a Wife, make out this free Confession?

Rash. He, dull Creature, Heav'n knows, is blind to all your Charm. Marriage acts only the Decrees of Duty, Love has the least share in't. In this Age a Husband with a Wife is like a Bully in a Church;—the only pleasure he takes is to sleep away the hours shoud'd be employ'd in Conjugal Duty.

Emil. Well! I am very glad our plots succeed so well: I swear I was half frighted t'other day when my Sister-in-Law, *Maria* discover'd us. Was it not done subtl'y? Did I not fetch all off agen with an excellent invention?

Rang. Good! rarely good! This Devil cannot fure have, so much impudence to deny this agen.

Rash. Ha, ha, ha! By Heav'n I'm ready to die with laughing when I think what Asses we made of'em. *Ranger* too, that busie Coxcomb,—what a fretting, and plotting, and sweating did he make for nothing!—Alas, poor Fool!—Ha, ha, ha!

Emil. Ha, ha, ha!

Rang. O the Devil steer you.—[Death, am I still their Property? I shall have a slice at your Nose ere long: I doubt not, my young Gallant,—I shall dash your Mummery.—

Rash. Come, we lose time:—Let talk be our diversion when we are old and can reap nothing else; our minutes now should all be spent in rap-ture.—Thus, thus, my Sweet!—Oh that we cou'd live thus ever.—How now, what noise is that?

Bubble within. Bawds! Strumpets Whores! Witches! Break open the door there; break open the door.—

Mar. Fetch a Leaver, or call the Smith over the way presently.

Emil. Oh Heav'n, my Husband and *Maria*! we are undone.

Rang. 'Tis *Bubble's* voice fure! this compleats my joy. Now let *Bal-zabub*, if he owes her any kindness; fetch her from hence, I'll guard this passage.

Rash. What! what shall I do, Madam?

Emil. Here quickly, run into this Closet, Sir, and jump out of the Window into the Garden; if you were gone, let me alone for the rest.

Rang. Who steps a foot this way, steps on his death; his Soul shall not be his a minute.

Emil. Ha! *Ranger* here? I am lost in my amazement.

Rang.

Rash. Death! and Hell and defenceless too! O cursed Minute!

Rang. No, Madam, I'll secure you from this stratagem: This Window shall be no Bawd to th' Intrigue now, that I'll be sure on.

Bubble within. Quickly, quickly! a Leaver, a Leaver!

Rash. No way to escape? Can I not climb the Chimney? Any thing to get free this once. Oh fate, taken I'll midst of our security, when we least thought of it? what shall we do?

Emil. I have it: Come hither, get ye under this Table, and gently listen to what I say: 'Tis ten to one he never searches here. Come, in, in quickly, and pray the rest may prosper.

Rash. I never had more need of prayers: I'll try. [Goes under Table]

Enter Ranger from the Closet.

Rang. So? that conveyance is fast enough: Now, Madam, what think 'ee of a steering Jost upon the Fool Ranger, the Coxcomb, the Ass

Ranger, and your jolly spleen to laugh, Ha, ha? I think the Dice are mine now: Now, Devil, I have trapt ye.

Knock within. [Takes out the Key to the door.]

Emil. This Key may add to my design: [Takes out the Key to the door.]

Bubble within. Down, down with it, break it open there.

Rang. What think you of that, Madam? Does your Husbands voice refresh you extremly?

Emil. Now help me, Wit, or or I am lost.

Bubble within. Help, help! Help, help!

Rang. Hell and the Devil, what does she mean?

Emil. Ah, cruel Man, cannot these Tears prevail? will nothing stop Barbarity? what have I done that I could deserve this usage? O most unfortunate of Women!

Rang. Dam her, I shall be finely caught if this hold: I must get away.

Emil. A Rape, a Rape! Help there, for Heav'n's sake, help!

Bubble within. Help, help! Help, help!

Rang. By Heav'n, I am snapt agch, catcht in my own snare.

Emil. Has my Husband been so much thy Friend, and wouldst abuse him thus? Thou base man, but Heav'n forgive thee.

Bubble within. Help, help! Help, help!

Mar. Ranger! etc, and Rashley absent: I have plotted finely.

Emil. What's this? what's this? what's this?

Rang. By Heav'n, I am snapt agch, catcht in my own snare.

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Emil. Has my Husband been so much thy Friend, and wouldst abuse him thus? Thou base man, but Heav'n forgive thee.

plain now that Traytor loves her, and has only made me an Engine to work his design with more facility.

Rang. *Rashley* gone too? Now has the Devil to spite me convey'd him away in a Mist: Here's like to be fine work towards; but I must stand the brunt now I am enter'd.

Bubb. Now, Sir, what a Pox make you here with my Wife? Hah?

Rang. So, it begins rarely! O this subtle Devil! Why, Sir, as I am a Gentleman, and upon my Honour.

Emil. O my Dear, a thousand thanks for this Deliverance; and by all our love I charge thee, by our Marriage-Vows, by all our Pleasures since, and Joys to come, I charge you revenge me upon that Traytor there:—He would have Ravish'd me!—Oh Heav'n, that ever I should live to be so put to't!

Bubb. 'Sbud! Ravish my Chicken? *Ranger*, you are the Son of a Whore, and I shall presume to cut your Throat.

Rang. Sir, do but hear me, upon my Honour all this is false.

Mar. It must be true! what should he come hither for, but upon some ill intent? I am resolv'd I'll be reveng'd on him however.

Rang. 'Sdeath! she against me too? this is worse and worse.

Bubb. Discover the matter, that I may do Justice on both sides.

Emil. Sir, know then,—*Ranger* long has lov'd me; often solicited me unlawfully:—but finding something in my Vertue that shook his designs, his recourse was to make you jealous of me and *Rashley*;—who, poor man, has often told me with sighs how deeply he has resent'd your unkind suspicions.

Bubb. Alas, poor Fellow!

Rang. O confusion! he begins to believe her again.

Emil. At last, Sir, finding his suit to be too troublesome for me to bear, and being loth to vex you with such fooleries,—I told *Rashley*, who promised all assistance imaginable:—I desir'd him also to be careful, and watch lest I should be surpriz'd; as to night (Heav'n knows) I was.

Rang. Dam her, what a Lye is this! Pray, Sir, let me speak.

Bubb. Not in my House, Sir, you have talk'd too much already; and by the Lord *Harry* I'll talk with you anon: but let that pass, go on, Chicken.

Emil. At last, Sir, this unhappy night coming hither as I used to do to my Devotions,—He it seems having corrupted some of my Servants, got into the Cloister, and thence came and surpriz'd me;—first locking the Door, and putting the Key into his Pocket.

Rang. I a Key? Sir, as I live I saw none: This is the most notorious Lye.

Emil. Oh wretched man! was it not Crime enough to make such an attempt, but you must persist in falsehood? Sir, he has it now about him there in that Pocket, I saw him put it in.

G

Rang.

Rang. This Pocket? — Why, thou Devil! hah! —

[*Puts his hand in's Pocket, pulls out a Key.*]

S death, how came it here? Magick, Witchcraft, — the Devil and all — combine against me! would I were well out, — if ever I plot agen, —

Mar. 'Tis evident now he would have Ravish'd her! Lockt her in for the purpose — Perfidious Traytor, see me no more.

Rang. A very fine bus'ness this!

Bubb. Is it so, Sir! I'll do your business for you. —

[*Goes to run at Ranger, and overthrows the Table.*]

Emil. Discover'd? I am lost agen.

Bubb. 'Sbud, *Rashley*!

Rash. 'Sdeath and Hell, what will become of me now?

Rang. How! *Rashley* under the Table? Then Fate is mine agen. Now, Sir, do you perceive any thing yet.

Mar. Stranger and stranger! what can this mean? or what could they both do here?

Bubb. 'Sdeath! how came he here? — Hoh! — [To *Emil.*]

Rang. Ay, — examine that point closely; sure this will make for me.

Bubb. As Gad jidge me, and so I will: speak, I say, how came he here?

Emil. Nay, Heav'n knows, not I; I believe for the same design with *Ranger*.

Rash. 'Sdeath, she'll betray me too.

Emil. Tell him, tell him, Sir: — speak for your self; — say any thing. [Softly.]

Rash. Speak? why, — 'Sbud, Madam, have I not done as you commanded me? Have I not watcht here this two hours to frustrate *Ranger's* design? What, d'ee think to make an Ass of me?

Rang. How, Sir, — my design? Dam me this must not pass upon me, Sir.

Rash. Nor you shall not pass upon my Friend here neither, Sir; I heard you this evening when you corrupted one of the Women to get you into that closter, that you might accomplish with more ease, Sir. But, Madam, this is a little unnatural, to make me suspected as his Collegue, when my design was so far different.

Bubb. 'Sbud I cannot find the meaning of this.

Rash. The meaning! Why, Sir, — she hid me under the Table as a defence against *Ranger's* insolence: but when she heard you at the door, and knew you were coming in, she conjur'd me by all the love I bore her to sit still, and not discover my self; — and all her excuse was your jealousy; (Jealousie with a Pox!) a very fine slight for the abuse she intended to me: — 'Sdeath, Madam, my service deserv'd a better reward if you consider it. — (Pray Heav'n this Lye prosper.)

Emil. Ha, ha, ha! — I knew I should vex him; but I confess 'tis all true: — For (my poor dear Rogue!) I am so hourly tormented with fear of thy naughty jealousy, that I dare not tell thee any thing, —

Prethee

Prethee desert it, do, my dear Sweet; ——— *I* fads thou wouldst be the best Husband in the World if thou wouldst but leave it. ——— [*Kisses him.*

Bubb. Well it must be so; this cannot be feign'd: ——— Come hither to me, ——— *I* will forsake it: ——— By the Lord *Harry*, thou art the best Wife in Christendom, ——— and *I* the most ungrateful Husband; but forgive, my dear, forgive. ——— [*Kisses her.*

We have all failings thou knowest, *prethee* forgive me.

Rang. So! now may *I* hang my self. 'Sdeath! all the Fiends are Asies to her. ——— *I'll* begon for shame, lest worst befall me.

————— *Succubus*, Farewell; ———

There is not such a Sorceress in Hell. ———

Exit.

Bubb. Come! hast thou seal'd my pardon?

Emil. You know the softness of my temper; but your unkind jealousy will kill me one day. ———

Bubb. *I* gad *I'll* kill my self first. Come, *prethee* no more. *Tom*, thy hand too; ——— come, *I* know thou canst bear with my frailty. ———

Rash. *I* Sir, *I* can bear well enough! but me thought 'twas a little strange to tax me.

Bubb. Come, come, all shall be well; ——— Faith, we'll go in and frolick. Oh my Dear, suspect thee. ——— Well, *I* am a Fool, that's the truth on't. ———

Ex. Bubble and Emilia.

Mar. The Devil helps her sure; for this was certainly an Affignation: *I'll* after *Ranger* and know the truth on't. *Exit.*

Rash. Ha, ha, ha! ——— Was ever plot carried thus? Sure never! Her Wit has more supplies than *I* have thoughts, and happily they end still; and Gad for my own part *I* shall love lying the better as long as *I* live for the success of this. ——— Once more all is well, and he the Cuckold still, Ha, ha, ha! *I* must go in and laugh with her.

Intrigue's her Masterpiece; and all may see,

A Woman's wit's best in extremity. ———

The Fifth ACT.

Enter Cordelia.

Cord. **W**ELL, of all Creatures that vex Mortality, a superannuated Lover is certainly the most troublesome, especially to one of my years: our inequality is so preposterous, and his address so unnatural, that *I* always entertain rather hate for his person, than compliance for his love: From Fourscore and five, Heav'n deliver me; 'tis an Age of doting. ——— Here he comes, *I* knew *I* could not be quiet one hour.

Enter Fumble.

Fumb. Sirrah, Sirrah! Rogue, Rogue! and how and how! Hah!

G2

art

art thou jolly, blithe, like a Bird in a Tree? Ifack I was impatient till I came to see thee: well, and how fits the Ring? does it shine? does it glitter? Hah, little black Rogue!—Ifack I bought it of the best Goldsmith in *Cheapside*, a Man of good Reputation; A Cuckold too, and they are always the honestest Fellows.

Cord. From henceforth let me desire you, Sir, to bestow your presents on some body else:—I sent your Ring back by your Man, he can best give you an account of it.

Fumb. Ha!—What saist thou? Counterfeit? Ifack thou art mistaken, Bird;—thou art, *bona fide*, they are as well cut as any in Christendom, and of the right Black-water: What, dost thou think I'll put any false Stones upon thee ifack? I am more civil, *lead*, there I was waggish;—But she's a witty Rogue, she'll apprehend the jest.

Cord. Was ever such an insipid piece of Antiquity? Play, Sir, forbear these impertinences, and assure your self I hate an old Fellow for a Husband, as much as an old Gown, or an old Piece of Wit, that after forty years Oblivion, with a new name, is publish'd for a new *Women* Play.

Fumb. What does she say now? But no matter, I'll go on. Well said, Bird, well said; *Bona fide*, thou hast Wit in abundance; that Colour, and such a sort of Nose, never fail. But come, we lose time, I know 'tis ordain'd I must marry thee: I am the Man that must gather the Rosebuds.—Ah Rogue!—I'll warrant thou'rt a Swinger, and Ifack that black a top there fires me strangely, I am all flame, and *bona fide*, methinks as youthful and Mercurial as any Spark of 'em all.

S O N G.

AND he took her by the middle small,
And laid her on the Plain;
With a hey down derry down, come diddle,
With a ho down darry, &c.

What think you, Madam? am I old?

Cord. So old, that your presence is more terrible than a Deaths-Head at Supper: for my part I tremble all over. There's a kind of horreur in all your antick gestures; specially those that you think become you, —that fright worse than the Devil; than the Devil, Sir. —[Aloud.

Fumb. The Devil! what of him, Bird? Pish, the Devil's an Ass, I ha' seen 'in a Play;—and ifack we lose time in talking about so worthless a matter. Lovers shou'd ne'er be slow in their Affairs. —For, as my good Friend *Randolph* tells me, Nothing is like opportunity taken in the nick; in the nick, Sweet heart!—*lead* I was waggish again, I was waggish again ifack. —Come, Bird, come.

Cord. What will you do, Sir? Heav'n, how he tortures me!

Fumb.

Fumb. Come along then ; — I have got a Priest ready, and paid for the Licence and all : — Prethee let me kiss thee ; I long to practice some thing that might please thee ; Never was man so alter'd ! never ! Come ! prethee Bird, — come, ifack I have not patience.

Enter Governess and Sir Roger.

Gov. Here's Sir Roger *Peasant* ! my dear Mouse desires to speak a word or two with you.

Cord. Oh here's some hope of deliverance ! Sir Roger, your humble Servant. Come hither, *Letice*, and stand just in my place : I am so tortur'd with this old Fellow, — prethee be kind to him, and follow him whither he'd have thee ; it may be a Husband in thy way, and a good Estate.

Gov. A Husband ! marry that's fine ! I warrant you, sweet Mouse, I'll be very punctual.

Cord. So, now let us slip aside and observe ; 'twould be an excellent revenge if he shou'd marry her, — He's coming to her already, and his eyes are so old and dim that he perceives not his mistake.

[They slip aside.]

Fumb. Delays, Sweet-heart, are dang'rous ifack ; I have consider'd it : The time I have liv'd in the World has given me the benefit of knowing more than another of fewer minutes. — Along, along.

I say thou shalt be my Queen, my Paramour, my *Clippara*, — and I will live another Age in Love, and then farewell old *Simon* ifack. Come, come along.

Gov. O sadness ! what happy fortune's this ? Well, I'll go with him, pray Heaven he be blind enough, that's all I fear.

Fumb. She seems kinder than usual ; — ifack I have wrought her finely. Come, poor Rogue, come.

Gov. I am ready, Sir ; — this was a happy hour ;

And if it hit but right, I'm made for ever.

[Exit Gov.]

Sir Roger and Cordelia re-enter.

Cord. Ha, ha, I am glad I am rid of him any way : But now, Sir Roger, to your business. — I hear your Nephew is sick.

Sir Rog. In verity, Madam, most dangerously sick, and the cause of my giving you this trouble was in verity to give you information of it ; for by his melancholy I find love is the cause. Ah, Madam, your last indifference was very prejudicial to him : 'Tis true, he denies it ; — but I am old enough to judge of the contrary, and therefore have found out 'tis Passion, nay Passion for you has laid him thus low, and nothing but your smiles can raise him, 'tis gone so far in verity.

Cord. I am sorry, Sir, I have the misfortune to be the occasion of such a disaster : — but is there any remedy ? what would you have me do ?

Sir Rog. Madam, my suit to you is, that you would be pleas'd to go with me and give him a visit ; the surprise of your presence I am confident

fidest will dissipate his melancholy, and perhaps totally banish his distemper.

Enter Maria.
But I see we are interrupted; let's retire, Madam, and if you please now will be a very good time to visit him.

Cord. Softly, Sir, I would not have my Cozen *Maria* know any thing of it; but if that can do him any good, I'll not be so cruel to deny it, 'tis an act of Charity. — Come, Sir, I'll go with you.

Sir Rog. Madam, you oblige us both. *Exeunt.*

Mar. Still baffled! sure this cannot last long; the Devil will be weary of obliging her in a little time. I have been yonder sitting *Ranger* about the last plot, and by all circumstances find what he said was true, and shall I leave off thus poorly? Pish, I cannot for shame. — I have Truth and Honesty on my side; — she's only cunning, and 'tis impossible that shou'd last ever. — Once more then have at 'em: — I have by several false messages huz'd it again into my Brothers ears; he believes, and will once more follow my Council; besides, I have here a false Key to her Chamber, and can surprize 'em when they least suspect; this, if *Ranger* be at all diligent, must needs effect it; — for I am resolv'd not to rest till 'tis done, for the satisfaction of my revenge on that false man. *[Ex. Maria.]*

Enter Apothecary and Sneak in a Night-Gown.

Sneak. Uh! Uh!

Apoth. Nay, Sir, if you would have the effects answer your expectation, you must suffer, Sir, and be patient.

Sneak. Ounds! I cannot have patience. — Sure a civil Clap might be cured without all this stir. 'Tis not a Miracle in this age. — Oh Lord!

Enter Sir Roger and Cordelia.

Sir Rog. O horrible! what's this I see?

Sneak. My Uncle! Oh I am undone, lost for ever.

Apoth. But, Sir, your civil Clap might ha' been an uncivil Pox in time.

Cord. How, Sir Roger, was it fit to make me Spectator of this object?

Sir Rog. The Pox? In verity I have brought his Mistress to fine purpose: Ah damn'd Rascal! The Pox? what shall I do? I am disgrac'd for ever. *[Aside.]*

Cord. Mark ye, Sir, pray what is that there?

[Pointing to a sweating Chair within.]

Sir Rog. What shall I say? (Death, she has found out his sweating-Chair!) Why, Madam, 'tis — umph — 'tis a Mathematical Engine they use at Cambridge. *Cob* was always addicted to study.

Cord. 'Twere a fault to hinder him then, Sir, being so well employ'd.

Farewell. *Ex. Cord.*

Sir Rog. She has found it out. — Sirrah, see my face no more: from this hour I abhor thee, a damn'd Rascal!

Sneak.

Sneak. Good Uncle!

Sir Rog. The Pox! A sneaking, sniveling Rogue! Heav'ns, was ever the like seen! But 'tis now a general Maxim, and your Sandy, Sheep's-face, unthinking Villain, is always the greatest Whoremaster.

Sneak. Why, by *Jerico*, it was by chance, Uncle; Hab-nab, as a man may say: As I hope to be sav'd 'twas against my will.

Apoth. Sir, your anger makes an addition to his distemper.

Sir Rog. What, you are his Pander, Sir, are you? but I think you may be the Devil for your honesty;—so may ye all;—such as your sooth 'em in vices;—I warrant you are tired with such Customers,—Ha, Sir,——are you not?

Apoth. In troth, Sir, my rotten Patients are so loath to die, and my sound ones, which for my Arts improvement I would make rotten,—so hasty to recover, that I confess I am often weary, but not tir'd, Sir.

Sir Rog. So, Sir, in verity, you are all a company of Rascals;—and as for his part, I'll instantly write to his Father to dishonor him, that I may revenge my disgrace, and punish his folly.——The Pox! a Son of a Whore! the Pox!

Exit.

Apoth. A mad old Fellow, but your penitence will recover all.

Sneak. Wou'd you were hang'd, by *Jerico*, for leaving the door open—Oh what shall I do? This comes of learning the Sciences in the Devils name.

Apoth. Patience, Sir, have patience.—— [Scene flows.] *Ex.*

Enter Rashley, Emilia and Betty.

Rash. A Trap-door, say you, Madam?

Emil. Yes, we happily discover'd it yesterday looking for a Ring accidentally dropt;—it opens upon the Stairs the backside of the Kitchen;—I am sure 'twill be very necessary in our Intrigue:—Here take the Candle you, and go and watch;—and when I give the sign, be sure be ready.

Betty. I'll not fail, Madam.

Emil. 'Tis good to be secure, for I know *Maria* has still an eye over us, and my Husbands new jealousy gives me fresh cause of doubt.

Rash. I gad, 'tis unnecessary:—This Trap-door must needs be very useful;—I see Fortune is ours still, and will not leave us.——Let us doubt when we see danger; there is none now, nor can be whilst our love continues.

Emil. Which I fear will be but a short time: for what is indirect is seldom permanent; therefore let us consider on't.

Rash. Dam Consideration; 'Tis a worse Enemy to Mankind than Malice: Let impotent Age consider, that is fit for nothing but dull same thoughts of what he has been formerly: Let the Lawyer and Physician consider, what Quibbles, and what Potions are most necessary: And let the stie Phanatick think his time out, and consider how to be securely factious: But let the Lover love on, still transported, whilst all his thoughts and senses are employ'd in the dear joys
of

of rapture, endless passion, without a grain of dull Consideration.
Emil. I swear the softness of our Tempers abuses half our Sex; we should not else be won so easily. But we are such kind Fools.

Rash. Ay, we are all Fools, Madam; that's the truth on't; but how shall we help it?

Emil. Resolve upon a remedy;—Love no more.

Rash. Resolve upon the contrary; Love for ever. Gad the world would be at a fine pass, if all were of your mind.

Emil. How now?

Enter Maria with a Light.

Mar. Stand there till I fetch you in; I'm sure they're here.

Emil. My Sister as I live! Malicious accident!

Rash. Hah,—with a Light too! How the Devil got the in!

Emil. Heav'n knows; unless with a false Key.

Mar. Nay, I are caught, and finely too, I'm cozen'd else. What plot now, Madam, to convey you hence?—Now show your mighty skill; and if there is a Devil at your service, employ him now, you never had more cause.——Methinks you are melancholy, why d'ee not laugh? smile at your Wit and great security? You, I know, have a thousand ways to get off still; or if you want, that Gentleman can supply you.

Rash. I supply! A plague o' your damn'd jest!

Emil. Hush,—and leave me to her.—Nay, Sister, this is barbarous to triumph o'er our misfortunes; You know your self what Love is, and what inconveniences it brings poor Women too.

Mar. You can confess now;—and here's a Gentleman not far off,—your Husband, Madam; I know this cannot chuse but be grateful to him, I'll call him to hear it.

Emil. Ah, be not so cruel to undo me quite!——I'll confess all to thee, and from this minute be converted.—Ah, had I taken thy counsel before, I had been happy.

Mar. Ay,—but you would persist, and now see what comes on't.

Emil. Oh! I am miserable! Forgive me, dear Maria!

Mar. Nay, Heav'n forgive you;—but come, will you confess? I have her at a rare advantage.

Emil. Most faithfully;—but let me do't i'th dark;—let no light see my guilty blushes.—it is enough my tongue dares utter it.

Dear Sister, let me not be too much ashamed!——Oh misery! misery!

Mar. Well, here is a light not far off, and thus much I'll comply with you.—Now begin.

Rash. By Heav'n I grow cheerful;—we shall scape, I am sure we shall.—Oh this dear Devil!

Emil. My grief ties up my tongue.

Mar. 'Tis time to grieve; But come, when d'ee begin?

Emil.

The ROTTING SISTERS.

11

Emil. This cruel man seduc'd me. *Cruel Rashley.* Where are you, Sir?

Rash. Here, Sweet, here!

Emil. First won upon me with his comely presence, hansom demea-
nours, — every several Grace my Soul admir'd. — Give me your
hand. — *[To Rashley.]*

But when he came to speak, his Tongue, his Charming Tongue, Oh
Heav'n, that I shall live to utter it! so ensnar'd me, that I no longer
knew my liberty; — but as his Victim gloried in my passion. —

Mar. With shame you live to speak it.

Rash. 'Twas my misfortune too; — but Heav'n forgive me, I shall
laugh out, — I am not able to hold. —

Emil. Down, quickly down. — *[Both sink in the Trap.]*

Mar. Now could I laugh till my heart ak'd agen, to think how I
have caught 'em. — I knew 'twas impossible she shou'd escape always —
and I will tyrannize more than a Turk over his Slave. — For my
part I am sorry for your infamy, and were it not that by the Laws of
Nature I have a great concern in any of my Brothers injuries, you might
love on for me; but since my Blood runs in his Veins, I dare not see his
infamy and let it pass unquestion'd: Therefore either swear from this
hour to desert *Rashley*, and never see him more; or your disgrace I will
this instant publish, or call your Husband to be Spectator of his shame
and yours. — What, are ye dumb? Not answer me! It seems you
dislike this Proposal; but do not provoke me. — Not yet? Nay then —
with in there? — Brother, — here they are, a light, a light, — quickly.

Enter Bubble with a light and long Sword.

Bubb. Where? where is this Traytor? this Scrumper? by *Scander-
beg*, — I am ready for a Charge: I'll push him with a Vengeance; —
Where is he?

Mar. Here, here! How now? What, are you got under the Table
agen? or into a corner? — Give me the Candle, Brother, — I am
sure I have 'em fast. — *[Looks about.]*

Bubb. Here's nothing; another mistake, as Gad jidge me.

Mar. She is a Devil, and I lose my labour. Gone! what both gone?
O I could tear my self: Which way? How! by what means could
they escape?

Bubb. 'Escape? — 'Sbud! 'tis impossible they shou'd escape if they
were here. — Pish, — this is only one of your Maggots, Sister, you do
but fancy you saw 'em. —

Mar. Fancy? — Eternal Light forsake me, if I did not both see and
speak to 'em two minutes since; heard her confess the crime, and vow
repentance; here, in this very place: but by what means they 'scapt,
I only can admire, not imagine. —

Bubb. Prethee hold thy peace; I say once more 'tis only a Maggot:
Sleep, Fool, and purge thy head from fancies. How now, Ned?

Enter Ranger and Betty behind.

Rang. Sir I know not whether the News¹ bring may please you;
but

but I have made a strange discovery yonder.

Bubb. Discovery! of what prethee?

Rang. Sir, I saw *Rashley* and your Wife going laughing Arm in Arm through the Entry—the Backside of the Kitchen into the Parlour,—where if you please to give your self the trouble, you may find 'em.

Betty. This is as my Mistress suspected, and I'll inform her immediately.

Bubb. Hey day! My Wife and *Rashley*? Art sure on't, Ned?

Rang. As sure, Sir, as I live, I saw 'em there:—nay, what's more, my curiosity inducing me to peep through the Key-hole, I saw his Head lie in her Lap,—whilst she with a fond passion strok'd his Cheeks, and dalli'd with his Hair; Faith, Sir, I could not see this and be silent; but you I fear will think the worse of me for it.

Bubb. In the Parlour, sayst thou? 'Sbud was ever such a confusion! Why, my Sister says that within these two minutes she saw and spoke to 'em here in this Chamber. They are here, and there, and every where, and yet I can find 'em no where; what a Fox shou'd a man think of this?

Rang. They are there this instant, Sir, upon my Honour.

Mar. Sure, I have not dreamt all this while! Did I not see her? by Heaven I saw the Devil in her likeness then.

Bubb. Why, peace, I say,—if you are mad, offend no-one but your self with it.—What a Fox shall I not believe my eyes? The House is not haunted that I know of, unless it be with Fools:—There's a Bob for you by way of Conclusion.

Mar. Yes, Cuckolds too! There's a Bob for you by way of Repartee.

Bubb. Cuckold? I'd have you to know I scorn your words—and were you not my Sister, I'd fetch you out with your Reparteers. What, because you are a Fool, you guess all persons are alike?—Do you but conceive me, Mrs. *Juniper*? I am a Turk at matter of fact when I see occasion.

Rang. Good Sir,—no more of this,—but go down and satisfy your self in the truth of my Story:—if I tell you a Lye, call me Fool,—Horse,—any thing,—do but go and see.

Bubb. 'Sbud, I know not what to do: One brings me up, another carries me down; one likes me, another abuses me; a third laughs at me;—and yet I find nothing, nor see nothing,—nor know nothing,—and you are nothing but Fools to make all this stir about nothing. But come I'll go with thee, Ned.

Mar. And I, that I may say once in my life I saw a Miracle.

Rang. I have her once more in the Noose of the slip; now the Devil hold her fast in th' other World:—'Tis above mortal power!
Come, Sir.

Scene

SCENE 4.

Enter Rashley and Emilia in Night-Gowns, Betty, Jeremy.

Emil. **H**ere, here, quickly take my Night-Gown, and put it on; you are sure they are coming.

Betty. Very sure, Madam; — I stood at the door and heard all.

Rash. What must I do, Sweet? — Præthes do not let us be surpriz'd again.

Emil. Uncafe, uncafe, Sir; — and let your Man represent you as *Betty* does me: *Jeremy*, be sure you play your part well, and Count her to the life. *I Put on the Gown.*

Rash. D'ee hear, Sirrah?

Jer. I'll warrant you, Sir. Come Mrs. *Betty*.

Emil. Stay, a word more in thy ear; — I see this Fellow is not a Block-head, and therefore am afraid of trusting him too far. — Keep him as ignorant of our Intrigue as thou canst; and if my Husband ask where I am, tell him I am gone to visit my Lady *Courtesy*. — I'll be in my Chamber; — and when they are all gone, bring me word what *Ranger* and *Maria* are doing.

Betty. Yes, Madam, I'll be very careful.

Rash. I will reward thy care, my pretty little

Emil. Hark! I hear 'em coming; — now to your postures. — *I Noise.*

Jer. Now, Mrs. *Betty*, we having to be an occasion, let us make Love in some Heroick Vein.

Betty. No, I am for the plain-dealing way. —

Jer. Pish! Others a great deal better, as thus;

Your Eyes with so bright Charms are deckt about,

That I could kiss 'em till I kiss 'em out.

Betty. Oh I hate that; — 'Tis very silly.

Enter Ranger, Bubble and Maria.

Rang. There, there, Sir; — D'ee see 'em now? will you believe next time?

Bubb. O dismal Object! — I am a Cuckold then.

Mar. This is miraculous; how was it possible they cou'd get hither? But I am glad they are here however.

Bubb. Now for a good full blow at his Head before he screams: 'tis a Cuckolds way of revenge I'm sure; Have at him! — *[Offers to Strike.]*

Jer. Oh Lord, what mean you, Sir, what mean you?

Bubb. Traytor! Rogue! Rascal! I'll — *Has, there?*

Jer. Ay, Sir, to I, poor *Jeremy*, Sir.

Mar. And Betty in her Mistress's Night-Gown.

Rang. Their old Friend the Devil has fetcht 'em away again.

Bubb. What make you here in their Night-Gowns?

Betty. Only, Sir, through an ambition to make Love as Gentilely as we could.

Bubb. Go, go, and find your Mistress out, and tell her, Her humble Servant and Husband desires to speak with her. — Look ye, Ned, you are a Fool I see.

Rang. I am so, Sir, I acknowledge it.

Bubb. And you, Madam, are a little leaning that way, are ye not?

Mar. I can say, nothing for my self, Sir.

Bubb. Then I can say ye are a Couple of Fools: Did I not tell you what all this would come to? Ha, ha, ha! It makes me laugh to think how busie you two Asses have been about nothing; and I am no better than a third Fool for believing you. But from henceforth, he that speaks against my Chickens Vertue, is the Son of a Whore; for Hids Bood she's the honestest Woman in Christendom, and he that denies it, I will immediately invade him with Battle-Ax, Poinard and Pistol.

Rang. She is a very Saint, Sir.

Mar. A very Devil, Sir! O Death, is there no remedy?

Bubb. I'll go instantly and reconcile my self to her, with a strict Vow never to doubt her more. — Oh Sir Roger! welcome.

Enter Sir Roger and Cordelia.

Faith! I was wishing for some good Company to be Witnels of my Reconcilement to my dear Chicken. You are melancholy, Sir. — I heard your Nephew was sick, I suppose that's the cause.

Sir Rog. If he has heard of what, I am disgrac'd for ever.

Bubb. Come, Sir, cheer up, cheer up, he will be well agen, doubt not.

Sir Rog. I hope so, Sir. Madam, this Generous Act of concealing the infamy of our Family, has so wrought upon me, that if I could be quite —

Cord. No more, Sir: — Your Nephews forbearance is all I desire: You are sensible now that I have some reason to request that.

Sir Rog. I am, Madam, and am extremely bound to your Generosity; and Gad I have another Nephew whom I'll make better by 200*l* a year to make you amends. — Well, Mr. Bubb, I am glad to come at so good a time, when mirth is going forward: you are a merry man, Sir, — and in verity I like your company.

Bubb. And I yours, Sir Roger: — for I am very merry for some private reason best known to my self: — We'll toll a Bummer about by and by, Faith?

Enter Fumble pushing in Governor.

Fumble. An old Crones, a Sorcerers: — What isack, and in the Devils Name, am I to be popr in the mouth with Fourscore and Twelve? A Beldam, a Witch, that expects next Winter to be turn'd into a Gib-Car, — thought fit to be yok'd with me? No, no, some wiser than some; and I'll have her know within this week that I am as fit for Two and Twenty, as Two and Twenty is for me. — In the mean time avant *Je suis*. — I like thee not, *Tess*; thou hast no black o' I op, isack, thou art not for my turn.

Bub.

Bubb. What, old Signior Fumble? what's the matter, Man?
Fumb. Yes marry am I, Sir, and chow'd damnable too; and some shall know't when I can find 'em.

Cord. He's groping for his Spectacles; now I expect to be rated.

Fumb. Ah,—are you there, Rogue, are you there! Why, you very Wag, wou'd you offer to serve me so? But hang thee, thou'rt a Rogue, and come isack tho' 'twas a Knavish Trick; I am pleas'd with the Wit on't:—Give me thy hand, and come and kiss me, and all shall be well agen.

Cord. Upon condition you never trouble me more,—there 'tis.

Fumb. Icod, she has a pretty Touch with her, she has isack; I forgive thee with all my heart.——Well, old Woman, depart in peace; old VWoman, I say depart, and trouble me no more:—I am busie, and can't dispende with the Fopperies of Age now.

Gov. Well, this comes of eating Sweet-meats when I was young. He had never found out the trick, if my want of Teeth had not discover'd me.

Bubb. Ha, ha!—Here had like to have been fine sport isfaith:—but wou'd I knew where my Wife is, that we might all go and address now I am in this good humour.

Gov. Sir, just as I came in, I saw her go up into her Chamber.

Bubb. Didst thou? I am glad on't isfaith: Come, lets all go.

Enter Betty.

Betty. Sir, I cannot find her; but I heard her say about an hour since, she intended to go and visit my Lady Countess.

Bubb. Not so?—I know where she is now.—Poor Creature! I warrant she sits so melancholy above now.—Well,—I dare proudly say I have the best Wife in Christendom: for isfaith I have been very jealous of her, but I was wrought upon,—when o' my Conscience the innocent Wretch wou'd not hurt a worm:—But come, we'll all go to her, and be fore Sir Rog, you plead for me,—in troth my heart akes to think how I have us'd her.

Betty. I must prevent their going up, or we are undone.

Is running, Maria stops her.

Mar. Whither are you running? I have some business with you.

Betty. Good Madam, I'll wait on you immediately.

Mar. Ye shall not stir till I have spoke to you.—Here must be something in this: find by her eagerness to be gone.

Sir Rog. Well, Mr. Bubble,——in verity I'll do my best in your behalf; my Tongue is at your service at any time.

Bubb. My Roger, you will oblige me in't.—She is the most innocent, sweetest, and most vertuous Person in the whole World, and I shall never be able to make her amends.—Come, let us go.

Rump. Now will I see how she behaves her self, and wonder at the prosperous impudence Hell has endow'd her with, tho' it lies not in my power to repel it.

Mar.

Mad. Now I think better on't, I'll defer my bus'ness till another time. — You may go where you please. *Exit.*

Bury. This cunning Devil has undone 'em; — nor lies it now in my power to hinder it. — Oh I cou'd Curse — *Exit.*

Scena ultima

Enter Rashley and Emilia.

Emil. **T**he Plague of living with such a Husband you must imagine is very disagreeable to my Temper; — and were it not for the happy hours I have the good fortune to enjoy in thy Society, my Life would be wholly uncomfortable: — But, my Dear, thou wilt forget me, one day I shall grow cheap to thee, shall I not?

Rash. No, never, — never, my Sweet — Thou hast more Charms each hour added to thee, rather than one diminish'd. — Forget thee! I sooner shall forget to feed my self, or that the Sun ere shone in midst of Summer, than thy more precious Favours. Thou bring'st each hour new Sweets, and every minute a thousand thousand Graces throng about thee, my Dear, — Dear, Charming, Sweet, Precious? — *[Kisses her.]*

Enter Bubble, Sir Roger, Fumble, Ranger, Maria, Cordelia.

Bubble *ring.* Softly, softly, Sir Roger, Poor Son! — I warrant he's at Prayers. — Hah! what's this I see? — Gad jidge me —

Rang. My Heav'n, they're here a-Kissing! — Oh happy minute!

Emil. Ah, who could have the heart to leave thy Bliss for such a Fool, such a Beast, such a dull, sordid, filthy, insipid Creature as my Husband? — *He W.* —

Bubb. How's that? Oh Devil!

Rash. I am smother'd with thy Charms; Oh for some Air! Hah! — Oh horror, cur'd minute! taken thus? — *He W.* — *Exit.*

Emil. My Husband! Nay then I am lost for ever. — *He W.* —

Bubb. Ah cursed Creature! is this thy Vertue? — But I'll — *Exit.*

Enter Sir Roger, Fumble, Ranger, Maria, Cordelia.

Sir Rog. Hold, Sir in verity that must not be; No Swords against Women in my Company.

Bubb. Then here let my Vengeance light! — Traitor! have I oblig'd thee to often for this? — Hah! at thee! — *Exit.*

Rang. Your pardon, Sir, I must hinder this unreasonable proceeding in the Field you may do what you please.

Bubb. Speak, Witch, speak! what reason hadst thou to use me thus? Thou Limb of the Devil, — speak, I say.

Emil. Use you thus? — Why, Sir, your Rage makes you suggest strange thoughts without cause. My kindness to Mr. Rashley was only because — he promis'd to be my Friend in Arguing my Reasonablement with you; — and because I knew he was your Friend, I therefore — I say, because I knew you lov'd him, I desir'd him so —

I was very urgent with him—about—about—No I mistake!
'twas he was urgent with me to intreat you to do me the favour—
no—to do him the favour: I mean, hum—to—to

Bubb. Pox! what a Story's here? Oh Strumpet! Witch!

Mar. To Cuckold him, was that it, Sister?

Rang. Madam, methinks your speech fails you exceedingly.

Emil. All will not do: O spiteful minute! Taken thus at last? Shame
ties my Tongue, and absence is most necessary. Exit.

Bubb. Oh farewell in the Devils Name! Oh Horns! Horns! found
a Cuckold at last! I have spun a fair Thread, by the Lord Harry; A
Cuckold at last!

Rash. A Cuckold! Why, Sir, have I done any thing but by your
directions? Why do you suggest such things to your self?
Well, Sir, if I have injur'd you, I wear a Sword, Sir, and so
Farewel. Exit Rashley.

Sir Rog. In verity this was a strange discovery; but such things
will happen sometimes.

Cord. So it seems; yet this methinks is wonderful.

Bubb. Oh unfortunate Husband! Well, I'll go instantly and
get a Divorce, and spend the remainder of my Life in penning a Satyr
against Women;—I'll call it, A CAUTION FOR CUCKOLDS;
where I will deplorably set down my own Case, and as a Warning-piece
for rash young men, and for the benefit of my Country.

Felix quem faciunt aliena Cornua Cantum.

Exit.

Fumb. Something is the matter now, if I cou'd guess: But mum! I
must not yet discover my failing.

Rang. Now the mighty Sophistress is o'erthown!

Mar. Thank Chance for that;—but no Wit of our own:—

Rang. Right, Madam; and by this a Man may see how unnecessary
a thing it is,---to strive to turn the current of a Womans fancy, when
it is bent to another. 'Tis a damn'd thing this Wenching if a Man
considers seriously on it; and yet 'tis such a damnable Age we live in,
that, Gad, he that does not follow it is either accounted sordidly un-
natural, or ridiculously impotent. Well, for my part henceforward
this shall be my Resolution;—

I'll Love for Interest; Court for Recreation;

Change still a Mistress to be still in fashion;

And all Women in an Amorous League;

But from this hour ne'er bank a Love-Intrigue.

Exit. omnes.

THE PLOTTING SISTERS.
EPILOGUE spoken by FUMBLE.

Well, Gentlemen, how d'ee? — Icod you sir,
As if you had no Souls, no Brains, no Wit.
What, not a word now in the Poets praise?
Hah! — Faith, I was a Spark in my young days.
A Clapt, and Clapt; — nay, sometimes to my cast:
I Clapt so long, — Gad, I (was) Clapt at last.
There I was waggish; — You know what I mean;
The Devil was in't, a plaguy Yorkshire Quean.
But 'tis no matter, — 'twas but thought a Jest,
And, Gad, I was as brisk then as the best.
So I am now; for Ifack I'd have you know,
Your Old Man, though he only serve for show,
Yet give him a young Wench with Black o' Top, —
And you shall see him Frisk, and Jump, and Hop; —
Icod, and wriggle! — Hah! — th' old Bell will sound,
Though there is ne'er a Clapper to be found.
But let that pass: Now your Applause disburse;
Why, — what the Devil makes you silent thus? —
What say ye, — The Play does not deserve it? — Hah! —
Icod, you are mistaken: — for I'll tell ye,
I once could write and Fudge, — and 'Fack did do
Very strange things; — but I've forgot 'um now:
But I remember what a wag — I was: —
I had so many Smutty Fests those days,
I could get none but Women to my Plays.
But that's all one, — Icod, the Touth that writ,
Does well; — and who knows, — may do better yet:
Therefore you should incourage him, D'ee hear?
And he that fails, I wish this Curse may bear,
That he be really my Character, —
Lascivious, Deaf, and Impotent as I;
And Gad that's Plague enough, — and so God bu'y,

FINIS.

